







# ORIENTAL WANDERINGS.



A ROMANCE.

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# ORIENTAL WANDERINGS;

OR,

## *THE FORTUNES OF FELIX.*

A Romance.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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By T. F.

— Well, go to ' take a vooll's  
Counsel, and do not stand i' your own light:  
It may prove petter than you think for, look you.

BEN JONSON'S *Tale of a Tub*.

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## ORIENTAL WANDERINGS.

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### CHAPTER I.

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But there's a fiend, whose baneful pow'r,  
The soul to madness can inflame;  
Whose breath can blast Love's rosy bow'r—  
Suspicion is her hated name.

CHARLOTTE C. RICHARDSON.

**N**EW volume, new pen, new paper, new matter, and some new characters—with all these before us, my dear, darling, little muses, it will be hard indeed if we cannot proceed. Talking of these same muses, how much I should like to clap my visual eye upon them! they are often living in “my mind’s eye, Horatio;” and I never was more fortunate in any large family, where the offspring were so nu-



merous (and I have been in many such too, my own, to wit, for one), where nine sisters paid me so much respect and attention, as these daughters of Mr. Apollo, whenever I pay a visit to his farm of Parnassus, and enjoy the inspiring breezes of "Helicon Hill." But as my Pegasus is waiting, by your good leave, I will once more mount, and throw the reins carelessly on his neck, in my usual manner, let him convey me, uncontrolled, over the boundless fields of fancy : but as we have, of late, peregrinated so much in the gardens of the harem of caliph Elmuton, viceroy of Grand Cairo, thither let us return, to cull whatever may remain worthy of attention, and needful to our sequel.

After Zoa had retired from the revels held in the "Vestibule of the Waters," the remaining part of the night was spent by her in much tribulation of mind. What Elmuton had dropped, respecting the high station she *might* fill in life, depressed, rather than raised her spirits.

to the love of the caliph, and wanton in luxury, when her heart was such a bankrupt to joy? oh, no, no! could she so soon forget the sacred vows she had so lately made to another, whom she dearly loved, and was by him as dearly beloved? could she so soon forget the youth and manly image of her countryman and friend, for an aged stranger? never! Elmuton might try to outdazzle the sun in splendour, still was she resolved her eyes should remain unmoved by the treacherous glare: could he use the rhetoric of an angel, still would she shut her ears to all his persuasive powers—should he use all arguments that love or deceit could invent, still should her heart continue inflexible and incontrovertibly fixed on the object of her choice.—“ Dear, dear image of my lost love,” she cried, “ shall thy Zoa ere become so base to desert thy tender remembrance? remembrance, alas! is all I now can boast—hope I have none: no delusive hope can draw a vision to divert my mind—no, no, all is one dark abyss of dreadful certainty—no faint

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to the love of the caliph, and wanton in luxury, when her heart was such a bankrupt to joy? oh, no, no! could she so soon forget the sacred vows she had so lately made to another, whom she dearly loved, and was by him as dearly beloved? could she so soon forget the youth and manly image of her countryman and friend, for an aged stranger? never! Elmuton might try to outdazzle the sun in splendour, still was she resolved her eyes should remain unmoved by the treacherous glare: could he use the rhetoric of an angel, still would she shut her ears to all his persuasive powers—should he use all arguments that love or deceit could invent, still should her heart continue inflexible and incontrovertibly fixed on the object of her choice.—“Dear, dear image of my lost love,” she cried, “shall thy Zoa ere become so base to desert thy tender remembrance? remembrance, alas! is all I now can boast—hope I have none: no delusive hope can draw a vision to divert my mind—no, no, all is one dark abyss of dreadful certainty—no faint

prospect to lead my poor thoughts for a moment astray, and make it appear probable I may once more behold the copartner of my heart. Dreary despair must I for ever endure ! welcome, welcome then, thou sorry guest ! take full possession of my every sense, banquet on my reason, until thou shalt consume the source, and leave no particle to blaze into recollection !”

Nature, overcome by her workings, exhausted the lovely unfortunate, who imperceptibly sunk into the arms of Morpheus, and was found thus by Ayesha in the morning.

This old lady, by one application and the other, had tolerably well overcome the fright produced by her precipitation, with her quondam friend the captain, into the pure element, “ where fishes live, and mermaids love to sport.” It seems too, the female slaves that attended her for a time after the accident, until she became composed, and wished to be left alone, for many and potent reasons : none knew so well as herself what recipe to fly to, and

what to administer for all sores, both of mind, body, or estate, as she did herself; and as the secret was worth keeping, she never wished its efficacy to be witnessed in the presence of any one, save and excepting the dwarf officer, who had so strongly recommended her to the trial of it in the first instance.

But to return.—The slaves that attended in her chamber, whether it was out of pique to the pimping, pigmy captain, or to gain favour with the old governante, I never could learn, but they so abused his little mightiness, for serving her ladyship such a scurvy trick, that, after pushing her, they said, into the reservoir, was not contented, but must leap in after her, like a savage crocodile, and endeavour to drown her, which was plainly to be seen by the most indifferent observer; and it was the general opinion he certainly would have succeeded, had not the very swans become indignant at his brutality, and flown to her rescue.

This piece of well-timed flummery just

tickled the aged dame's consequence, and she was happy to think herself the object of pity, rather than ribaldry. After vowing a thousand vengeance on the dirty, duck-legged dwarf, as the author of her misfortune, she dismissed her attendants, with suitable remuneration for their *kind* services and information; she now *laid* to at the contents of her flask, and then *laid* down to sleep.

When Zoa awoke to the sorrows of a new day, the first salute that met her ears was the volubility of her old governante. Great were her praises, and high her commendations, on the festival of the late evening, which was given, she repeated, by the caliph, in honour of her, Zoa's, uncommon beauty and attractions; she then begged her *protégée* to unrobe, put on a more suitable dress, and repair to the baths. This however was declined by the disconsolate slave, who sipped her coffee, and retired to the balcony of her chamber, to inhale the fresh air of morning; but, at intervals, was her mind further harassed

by a repetition of Elmuton's condescension from the mouth of this beldam, and his intentions to make her sultana of his heart, and his harem. At intervals, however, the cruel treatment Ayesha had received from Tabel was not forgotten, with many execrations on his nasty head, for the disgraceful catastrophe.

Zoa stirred not from her chamber, nor was she annoyed this morning by the intrusion of visitors; she had on still the costly dress and ornaments worn the preceding evening; these were of her own selection, from a vast assortment always in the custody of Ayesha and Tabel; and most aptly was it emblematic of her faith: the tunic, or upper vest, was an azure blue, richly embroidered with sunflowers, in their natural colours; her trowsers *en suite*, and slippers of gold cloth; a kind of light turban she wore, the ends of which reached to the ground, and a bird of paradise plume, fastened with a knot of brilliants; but on no account whatever could she be prevailed upon to display on her



person the emblem of Mahomet. Regardless of appearances, she continued thus, although somewhat disordered, until the signal of the bell already mentioned invited the females to the gardens, to partake the recreations this enchanting place afforded. Accompanied by her keeper, she sought the air; and although near midday, so were the walks and retreats contrived, as to preclude the intense rays of the sun, while fountains, continually playing, rendered the whole cool and refreshing. Zoa sought the most unfrequented paths, much to the discomfiture of Ayesha, and indulged in solitude.

By a circuitous path, they arrived, by chance, near the spot where we left Sadak. The distant hum of singing and merry-making was heard: this raised the old woman's ire, and, with some petulance, she renewed her hackneyed theme. She begged Zoa to meet the caliph, to make him happy, and herself great, by conforming at once to his most ardent wishes.—“This conduct, of yours is most mon-

strous!" she continued, with much warmth. "What! refuse the caliph's love, indeed! I have seen in this harem the finest beauties that ever the sun shone on pine themselves into ugliness—I have witnessed such jealousies, and have known some, that would almost have sacrificed their lives, to have gained, but for a day, Elmuton's love. Go to, you beautiful simpleton, and teach your heart to love."

"My heart is already overcharged with love," replied Zoa. "Such love as I now feel can never be taught—it is the inspiration of Heaven alone, breathing in two bosoms but one pure wish: those that can prostitute such a flame never felt the sacred warmth that flows from genuine love."

"Tush, tush!" answered Ayesha; "all this is very nonsense, worse than romance; fancy what you have lost is with you still, and the delusion will soon grow into a reality."

The distressed Zoa became shocked at

the depravity of the old hag; and addressing her in a voice almost inarticulate by sighs, said—"If you shew me the statue of my love, with admiration will I gaze on it; but when I clasp it, breathless, to my bosom, it is then I find the cheat, and feel the loss. Go, Ayesha, go," she continued, "to thy imperious master, convey to Elmuton the wretched Zoa's firm resolves: tell him, too well I know I am his slave—purchased, and paid for by him, in gold, or bartered for, as one of his veriest animals: although from every happy hope cut off—although every faint idea of ever again beholding those my soul so fondly loves, is vanished, still will I hold most sacred to the vows I have made: go and tell him this, and then return with the mandate for my death."

The old woman could scarcely restrain her temper within proper bounds. She fidgeted first one way, and then another—adjusted her dress, and then took a pinch of perfumed snuff; at last, with a contemptuous toss of the head, exclaimed—

“Very fine indeed! no, no—no such errand as that for me! a few days more will much alter your tone; and you will do well, in the mean time, to think what you are, and what you might be.”

Poor Zoa, at this ill-natured gibe, felt much hurt; her heart was ready to break, and yet too proud to relieve itself by tears, at the present moment; she therefore turned away from the old Jezebel with the greatest contempt.

Madam Ayesha now began to discover she had given her tongue rather too much licence; she then followed the fair mourner, and taking her hand, said, with a kind of conciliating tone—“Come, come, fair beauty, you will learn better; these pretty fingers were not made to toil, nor thy tender and delicate frame to labour: thy too susceptible mind was created for the softer passions only; it is cruel in thee not to return Elmuton’s love.”

Zoa turned on the mistress, with a look full of indignation, and cried—“Name not love like Elmuton’s to me—it is pro-

fanation all: go, get thee gone awhile, and let me here indulge in my grief, and banquet on my tears."

"Ay, tears, indeed," answered Ayesha, who seemed to rejoice at being discarded for awhile—"have thy fill of tears, and let those piercing eyes be like two flowing fountains, spouting forth that, that memory should not retain." She then hurried away down the avenue, to join in the frivolity of the looser inhabitants of the harem, and left the unhappy Zoa to ruminate over her vicissitudes, when she thus gave vent to her troubles.—"Memory, saidst thou, old woman! oh, why will not memory quit its empire over this poor brain, when thinking almost brings madness! The poor idiot, whose every wish is gratified when his meal is made, must surely be the happiest of men; for those who have their reason full awake, with sad perplexities ever are beset." Here her thought seemed to overburthen, and bury her within herself; and as not knowing where her steps were leading,

she made towards the alcove, at the entrance of which she started back, as though some fearful beast had lurked there, and fixed its death-dealing looks on her.—“Gracious Powers!” she exclaimed, “a man! and sleeping too—a fellow slave! Poor wretch! overcome with fatigue, thou hast sunk into a blessing, the short enjoyment of which will, most likely, cost thee thy life. Oh! once, like thee, would sleep him my soul holds most dear; and in his slumbers, after the toils of the chase, would I watch over, and carefully guard him till he awoke: oft have I rebuked the breeze for its soft murmur, lest it should disturb his repose; or if the wanton gnat gambolled on his cheek, it would raise my anger as much as a rival’s smile—so jealous is the affection of true love. Ah! see, he awakes! I will warn him of his danger, and bid him fly.”

Sadak raised his head, and covered his face with his hand, then fetched a deep and sorrowful sigh, and turned his coun-

tenance from the light, as if again to court the balmy god.

Zoa remained at some short distance; well she knew the danger that awaited him, if he should be discovered; and yet she feared to rob him of that enjoyment which she herself was so much a stranger to. Her sleep had not, of late, been natural, but more the effect of food and living, to which she had before never been used, than by the call of nature. Again she looked on him, with an eye of sympathy: to let him sleep, thus exposed, was but to increase his danger—whereas, if she awoke him, he might manage, some way or other, to make his escape, without further observation, and thus preserve his burthensome life. At length, resolving on the latter, she addressed him as follows, with a voice loud enough to pierce his hearing, and yet not to awaken distant curiosity—“Poor thing, you trespass here, and are in great danger, if the guards discover you: I would have you endea-

vour secretly to escape and save your wretched life."

Sadak aroused himself at this, but shewed no curiosity, by turning to his kind considerate friend, nor gratitude for the warning, but putting his hands to his face, muttered the following—"Save my life, saidst thou? I do not live—at least, so could wish—but busy thought will give that wish the lie!" He then stretched himself erect, with his face full to the light, and was departing, without taking any further notice.

As Zoa caught the view of his face, such a dreadful sensation pervaded her every sense, and took such an effect on her frame, that she had nearly sunk to the ground.

Sadak had passed on two or three paces from the entrance of the alcove, when Zoa, in a fearful voice of agitation, exclaimed—"Oh, great Powers! why what strange phantom is this? but that it is impossible to be, else would I call thee *Sadak!*"



The slave, at hearing his name mentioned, turned partly round, and appeared astounded at the sound—after a moment's pause, answered—"Who calls Sadak? it is not Sadak now; what I was, and what I am, are different quite." He then took a cursory survey of Zoa, and turned away, as from the greatest stranger.

Poor Zoa became almost senseless with emotion, and as if doubting her own reason, and gazing most earnestly on him, said—"If thou art of this, or any other world, thou art, to me, Sadak still: or if I dream, then let me never awake from this sweet delusion—or if thou art dead, teach me how to die, to be with thee, and let our spirits join."

"Sadak heard her with a strange mixture of feelings; now he fixed his eyes intently on her face, and then wandered over her whole appearance—then passing his hand repeatedly across his forehead, and again looking half around on her, and forcing a kind of smile at his own credulity, delivered thus his thoughts—

“ Oh, my weak foolish brain, to draw such comparisons—that this rich gilded bird should make such sounds, as my poor simple dove was wont to do !”

He then again turned his face away, and seemed buried in the delusion.

Zoa's situation was now painful in the extreme; the first thought that struck her, when she witnessed this behaviour of Sadak's, was that his reason had forsaken him, and with a half frantic tone exclaimed—“ Oh, it is, it is my Sadak, and his senses are fled! then to thy Zoa thou art living dead indeed.”

At the sound of her name he started, as though a dagger had pierced his brain, and with his hand pointed towards her, and his eyes wildly glaring, he cried; with rapidity—“ Zoa—Zoa! mention but that dear, dear name again, and I will blister my tongue in praises to thee for it !”

Zoa, more dead than alive, said, with a feeble voice—“ Save thy tongue, to tell thou lovest me still, and let thine eyes their proper office do.”

Sadak, as still doubting his senses, replied—" Mine eyes—no, no, they don't belie their senses; and yet my ears would play the flatterer, and bid me listen, as to one I loved."

Zoa, for a space, could not articulate a single sound; her sight fell upon the ground; as the eyes of her lover were rivetted on her, he seemed to be bursting between hope and fear. Zoa exerted her energy, and raising her eyes on him, pathetically uttered—" There was a time, Sadak, when thou didst want no bidding; thine ears, eyes, tongue, and all thy faculties, voluntarily spoke."

The wretched slave could hold no longer; like one made furious, he darted upon her, and caught her in his arms, and as he pressed her to his bosom, and found the lovely substance real, the greater became his astonishment; now he held her at the extremity of his reach, and gazed on her with fervency and wonder; then pressed her to his bosom, again encircled her with his arms, and again looked on her. At

length his passions found vent in speech, and he delivered himself thus—" Oh, blessed deity, this is no vision!—Speak, my beloved, speak once again!"

Zoa was so far overcome, that to speak was almost too difficult a task; but throwing herself on the neck of her new-found friend, she faintly exclaimed—" Oh, my Sadak!"

For a time they remained clasped in each other's arms, regardless of their situation, and the danger that surrounded them; all their thoughts seemed entwined in their ardent embrace. At length, Sadak, recovering from his ecstasy of bliss, cried—" Oh, great and glorious sun! 'tis true, 'tis true—all this is real! witness this, thou blessed deity!" Then raising the recovering maid, said to her—" Sweet love, say how came ye here? tell me quickly, or my enraptured soul will burst its tement, and in its happiness seek Elysium."

To which flow of ecstasy Zoa answered—" Hold but thy raptures, and find Ely-

sium here; I am but a slave, as thou art, Sadak."

Sadak, at the name of slave, darted a look upon her apparel, as if with **the** lightning of his eyes he would have consumed it.—"A slave!" said he; "but why those gaudy trappings, Zoa? they ill set off the native elegance that I admire."

Zoa answered with a sigh—"I am the caliph Elmuton's slave, dear Sadak; and so I fear art thou."

Sadak started at this, as he would have done had he suddenly encountered the fearful anaconda, and striking his forehead with his hand, his quivering lips could scarcely convey these words—"The caliph's slave! Oh, kind Powers, have mercy on my brain!" Then turning quickly on Zoa, articulated with such vehemence, as much to alarm her—"But art thou still pure, my love—pure as yon glorious sun?"

Zoa, in a calm voice, answered—"What is there as the glorious sun, so pure, his heat will all corruption quick destroy?"

yet, like the sun, my love its warmth all pollution ever shall defy. But think not, Sadak, that my love is grown weak, or I will hold thee, as doth the sun the moon, and keep thee ever round me, wandering, gathering light and life from me."

The alarmed lover felt this metaphorical rebuke, and clasping her in his arms again, answered—"Oh, my blessed planet! my light, my life, my inmost self, my hope, my soul is in thee! thou director of my every sense! But this is not the proper sphere for thee to shine in, thou pretty star of perfection—it is full of danger! such evil-omened constellations and wicked satellites here hover around, their baneful influence may destroy thee, and consume thy excellence. That thought sets my brain on fire. Come, sweetheart, let us at once away, and shun their fearful altitude. My arm shall fell a host of these proud freemen, if they dare impede our passage."

Zoa was afraid lest his daring spirit

should soar too high, and dreadful thoughts work up his imagination into desperation. She therefore set their danger before him in its worst shape, told him it was impossible for them to make their escape by force; and all their ingenuity would avail them nothing, at such hours as the present. She prayed him again to be calm, and set their minds upon invention, for by cunning only could their darling hope be realized.—“ Hold!” she cried, “ I find my busy wits already work. This same Turk, this wicked caliph Elmuton, has fixed his wanton eyes most strongly on me, and many designs has he used to gain what he calls my love, and often has he protested honourable intentions. Him, by various arts and subterfuges, will I play upon, and so bring our object to its final bearing.—Nay, fear me not, Sadak,” she continued, seeing her lover by his gestures discovered his doubts and fears. “ Mark yon bold arched window, at the bottom of this avenue, whose balcony is filled with such rare plants as creation can

afford ; that is my chamber—its costliness but mocks my woe. There Sadak—there, dear love, have I passed my sleepless nights and unhappy days. The heavy latticed windows on the other side look into a large court-yard, of considerable depth below. There can I see and hear the sentry, as he wiles the night away ; from him will I the watchword catch, as from sentinel to sentinel it passes ; and when the opportunity shall fit, must I find you, as hidden you must remain hereabouts until midnight ; then will we borrow wings of love, and take our flight.”

Sadak fixed his eyes on her with a look expressive of delight ; his countenance was like the beams of Hyperion, when they dispel the chilly atmosphere, and make the face of nature glad with genial warmth. Pressing his lips to hers, and mingling bliss with bliss, he exclaimed—“ Oh, thou blessed inventor, we shall again be more than happy ! Say, shall we not, sweet love ? and when security hovers around our heads, and peace occupies our dwell-



ing, then shall we recount past dangers and vicissitudes, as a tale that has been told to us. Oh, my beloved! I would that night were come, or I could die until then, or be with thee! for thou art now more than ever my very existence."

Zoa now began to consider seriously of their present dangers, and warned Sadak of them.—“We are here much in harm’s way, dear Sadak,” she said, “so closely hemmed in by jeopardy on every side; yet it will almost break this poor heart to part for so short a time. But let us trust in yon bright deity, and if this night should not fit our purpose, or unforeseen obstacles obtrude in our path, to-morrow then we on this blessed spot will meet again.”

Sadak at this again drooped, and tenderly taking her hand, said—“Say not to-morrow, love—to-morrow is an age. Beside, consider what horror may not one fatal night produce. When I am not by to guard thee, perhaps some ruffian thief may rob thee of thy inestimable jewel—thy virtue, and leave thee only a poor

despoiled casket. I cannot bear that frightful thought."

'Oh, fear me not, thou tender guardian!" Zoa answered; "he that would the jewel purloin, shall first destroy the casket, ere he shall obtain the precious gem.—Great powers of safety!" she suddenly exclaimed—"fly! fly, dear Sadak! yonder comes the governess, and the chief eunuch officer. See, they approach! Where canst thou secrete thyself, dear, dear Sadak? Away! away! our fates depend on thy safety! and let hope now be the life we live in."

Sadak again pressed her to his bosom, and with a voice hardly intelligible from emotion, cried—"I cannot life endure on hope alone; warm once again those longing lips with thine, and let me suck the honeyed balsam deep; so like the bee, that through the winter lives on sweets it gleaned, when happy summer smiled."

They then threw themselves into each other's arms, and fervently embraced. The

voices of Ayesha and Tabel were now plainly heard, in high dispute. The lovers separated. Zoa proceeded down the avenue, so as to meet the captain and his lady, and formed an excuse to detain them, thus giving Sadak an opportunity the better to secrete himself.

This, however, he found no such easy task; the gardens had lately undergone many improvements, and the underwood about this spot cleared away—thus he could find no ambush. His only chance seemed to be, that he must scale a wall at the back of the alcove, and drop down the other side into a sort of outer court of the castle, and which was but little frequented. He had no time to spare in revolving ideas, but fixed on this alternative at once: the evergreen that overspread the wall assisted his ascent; but when he had gained the top, he was much surprised to find his progress impeded, by the sight of an officer and soldier in earnest and close conversation; but he was now on a pinnacle of danger—to return

was impossible—advance he must. He therefore, with much caution, dropped from branch to branch, as silently as the nature of his situation would allow. When he had reached the bottom, he laid himself closely, securely, and, fortunately, unobserved, in the overgrown clusters of shrubs and wild plants at the foot of the wall.

Zoa met the noble captain and the lady governante most opportunely, to settle a terrible difference between them, arising out of the woful misfortunes of the former night. Much *pro* and *con* took place: the lady stormed—the gentleman stammered; by turns they sweat—by turns they swore, until fatigued with their confabulation, Zoa cut the concern short, by recommending the parties to retire to the private boudoir of madam Ayesha.

This was assented to, and most happy was Zoa to have an opportunity of retiring alone to her own chamber.

## CHAPTER II.



There is a fate that flies with towering spirits  
 Home to the mark, and never checks at conscience.  
 Poor plodding priests, and preaching friars, may make  
 Their hollow pulpits, and the empty aisles  
 Of churches, ring with that round word; but we  
 Who draw the subtle and more piercing air,  
 In that sublimed region of court, :  
 Know all is good we make so, and go on,  
 Secur'd by the prosperity of our crimes." BEN JONSON.

SADAK had not long remained in his hiding-place, before other matters claimed his attention, and drew his thoughts from the scene he had lately gone through, and was the principal actor in. By attention he soon caught the names of those so close in private conversation. The officer was Sebastian, who thus addressed himself to his inferior—"Saldan, thou hast thus far done well; and much am I pleased to find thee obedient to my wishes. It would have hurt me much, to see so good and

tried a veteran fall by the ignominious hands of a public executioner. There still hangs on the many much doubt and uncertainty as to the murder of the prince Hamman; circumstances lay it incontrovertibly at thy hands: but for the late services thou hast rendered to me, and benefited the state, by exposing the hypocrisy and apostacy of that villain Felix, and his coadjutors, I will take especial care of thee; and may thy future life and doings be such, as to make, in some part, atonement for that ferocious and unprovoked offence on the sleeping prince, and hazarding my reputation! But of that no more. To all the world, me excepted, thou art now secure, and by thy future acts, may lock the secret securely in my breast—thou shalt not call me an ungrateful master; and much am I pleased with thy present appearance, and disguise of person—it is what is proper, and will make thee pass securely.”

Here it may be necessary to jog the reader's recollection, and say, Saldan had

profited, in a manifold degree, from the purse and advice of Sebastian since we last met them together. His dress, &c. had now so much altered him, it would have been almost impossible for his closest intimate companion to have recognised in him the former Saldan.

Sebastian in a familiar manner approached his soldier, then casting his large grey eyes around him, as if he would penetrate the very walls, and chide them for being so near; but not seeing any living creature at hand, save his companion, and thinking himself secure, continued thus—“Saldan, come hither, I have some words for thy most secret ear, and doings for thy cautious and well-practised hands. But tell me first, didst thou ever aspire, that is, wish to be above thy fellows and companions?”

Saldan looked at his officer for a moment, as if puzzled for a reply; but soon recovering, answered him—“When in the army, and on hard duty, I have often wished thus.”

“Ay!” replied Sebastian, with a look full of meaning; “and when in the army, had nearly gained a height that would have placed you far above them indeed—given you such an elevation that few citizens even gain, although there are so many that deserve it.”

The soldier, more confounded and perplexed at this strangely-delivered meaning, confessed he knew not at what his master pointed; when this subtle villain answered—“Dost thou not see yonder platform, that looks so proudly on such good buildings that are beneath it?”

Saldan for a moment followed the direction of the officer’s finger, and said—“The scaffold mean you, seignior, where the wretched guilty are executed?”

“Thou hast hit the mark most cunningly,” was the answer. “That is the height thou wouldst have gained—thy deeds had surely have brought thee thither, had not my mercy kept thee on a level; but be but grateful, and I will no more of this. But say,” he continued, “would



not thy gratitude wish to see *me* high in rank and office?"

The affrighted and terrified creature could scarcely make an answer; but confusedly said—"If my poor wish could make thee great, thou hast that already, even to the sultan's dignity."

Sebastian, with a grin such as a savage beast would give, when about to pounce on its victim, after decoying it to his toils, replied—"No, no, not so high yet. But shouldst thou not like to see me caliph?"

To which the soldier quickly answered—"Often has that wish of mine been coupled with the general desires of the troopers. The factious broils that now so frequently disturb the state, and yet bring ~~no~~ profit to the soldier, might soon find an end, and other foes of more advantage sought after."

Sebastian, when he heard this, caught his creature by the hand, and, with much fervency of speech, answered—"Right, right, my honest Saldan—a lazy life to a good soldier, seems too near akin to

cowardice to be enjoyed; but when the commander holds the laurels from being plucked by pleasure-taking, it is the veteran's fault if he then submit. Is it not so with us, my valiant mate?" At these words, shaking the hand of his soldier, and fixing his eyes on his face, as though he would penetrate his very inmost thoughts, then continued—"This woman-sneaking caliph here, this Elmuton, will dangle for hours at a petticoat, sing songs of love, play tricks of fancy with wanton girls, and revel with fools, while each petty thief grows into a bravo, and each subaltern for mastery tries. Is this the time that such as us, with servile rank, should sit quietly down, and applaud the hand that holds the chastening rod—bow submissive to a milksop's frown—to an old grey-bearded dotard, who, for a woman's smiles, will forget the father's injuries, and fill so dastardly the arms of beauty? Oh, Saldan, I am sick of this! The world will point at us, and we shall be the laughingstock for fools."

This laying open of Sebastian gave Saldan confidence, who thus replied—"Often have I heard the troopers say they wished Sebastian was all in all their chief, and but for very strife would have it so."

Sebastian stood for a moment silent, but his eyes were busily reading the countenance of Saldan: he stole his hand up the arm of his soldier, and rested it on the shoulder; then drawing him nearer towards himself, said, with a loud sort of whisper.—"There is a way, my friend, and without strife, to give thy honest comrades their wish. Thou and I the deed could well accomplish. His two sons thou knowest are both made safe; and Elmuton is our only obstacle. A little stratagem would make him secure, and thou and I raised to our utmost wishes." Here he drew from his band a *vial*, curiously wrought with hieroglyphics, and holding it before his follower, continued thus—"Dost thou see this *vial*? its contents are certain—they are a curious mixture of poisons, that work upon the taker,

and produce an incurable sort of madness, with never an interval of perfect reason; it is most subtle *stuff*; the dread and midnight sisters, in their mysterious avocations, have made it up, and with the waters of the fatal *Gallus* brewed it sure: After a time, he that hath swallowed it, will act as one in sleep, and perform his former life over again, or stir up the secret wishes of his soul, and disclose his hidden thought to day and man."

As the officer continued this dreadful disclosure, Saldan evidently became much agitated—his lips quivered—his limbs faltered—his eyes failed—and he would have sunk to the ground, had not Sebastian aroused him with a sudden shake, and exclaimed at the same time—"What is the matter with thee, man? What, dost thou tremble at the thought of making a man perpetually *drunk*? only stealing his reason. Go to, for a fool! It is the only way to make him happy: he then feels nor joy nor sorrow; his faculties work as by instinct, while his senses sleep for ever!

Thou couldst not have trembled thus the while murder was doing, or thy hand could not have made so sure an aim ! Stand nearer to me, man ! What art thou afraid of ?”

The terrified Saldan was now forced to exert his energy ; and as he again drew near his hardened master, he was accosted thus—“ Thou must attend me this night at sherbet-drinking : the caliph doth propose to hold a little revel with his officers ; be thou near, and when Elmuton shall call for drink, mix thou this into his cup, and let it pass to him : none will suspect ; and when the effect shall work upon him, as soon it will, I will then declare his multiplied troubles of late have so preyed upon his mind, that grief hath stole his reason. The wonder will not last long ; a little modest mourning, and then we cry *good now ! good now !*”

Saldan had so far recovered as to collect the meaning of all that had fallen from his wily superior. After revolving his thoughts within himself for some time,

he spoke—"The way seems so easy, and the doing so simple, that I dare——"

Sebastian caught him up on the word "dare," as quick as lightning.—"Dare! dare what? there is no daring in it: and to make us perfectly secure, here is another vial, nearly the counterpart in appearance," here he produced another small square bottle from his waistband, and proceeded—"made of such hellish and night-growing herbs, that, when swallowed, it produces instant death; all the beldames combined their black and mysterious knowledge in brewing it—it is such as fickle and wicked Circe to her husband gave. You know," he continued, the officer of the castle-guard, called *Monrod*, a surly elf—he, that often treats me with so much contempt and indignity, and watches my every action with such Argus and suspicious eyes, whose tongue is ever loaded with doubtful sentences, and from whose mouth praise is never heard. Mark me, Saldan! he is a stumbling-block, that must be removed: that

task be mine. I will hawst him fast enough asleep, for at this banquet he must pledge with me—I will seal his prying senses in such a dream he shall not awake, to tell his friends the wondrous tale. Flag not thou in thy duty, nor fear me in my resolves. It is the touchstone of our greatness, Saldan, and all depends on thy promptitude—it is a key too, with which thou lockest a certain secret securely in my bosom, and preservest thy very existence; and instead of dying an ignominious and reprobated death, to have thy carcase exposed, until the elements, ashamed at the sight, consume it piecemeal, and charitable winds scatter the polluted particles, over the face of the earth, and leave no trace of thy being—instead of this, thou mayest live to a good old age, and die respected, when a fair and white monument may grace thy grave, as many other non-discovered villains have.”

Saldan hastily stretched forth his hand, and said—“ Give me that Elmuton is to swallow, and ere the morning’s sun shall

light us to our prayers, I will be the first to hail Sebastian caliph of Grand Cairo."

To which the officer replied—"Hold! hold! not so fast! be cautious—we have a wonderful scene to act, and ourselves the principal actors, that are to survive, and witness the effect—here, take thou this," he said, at the same time giving one of the vials, "and mind thy duty well, for that is the first to make thee great as me."

As Saldan received the bottle, he eyed it with much curiosity; and then gazing at the other in the hand of Sebastian, answered—"This vessel and that are so much alike, I can see no difference between them."

"Keep thou *that*," was the reply; "I purchased them of a cunning gipsy, deeply skilled in all the mystic arts; see these hieroglyphics—how they differ! *that* one is thy commission, and mind thy duty well: see, place it within thy dress securely, and, above all, keep thyself in private until I shall command thy service. Go, go now—away! away—enough!"



Saldan, without further ceremony, placed the vessel within the folds of his dress, and was about to make some reply, ere he departed; but the officer, in a hurried manner, urged his going.

When clearly out of sight, Sebastian stood for a moment, as overcome with conflicting emotions; by a sudden impulse he raised himself, and, with some difficulty recovering his respiration in soliloquy, unburthened his thoughts—"Good Powers! what is this? I feel sick, giddy, and scarce know how—what can all this mean? yet I do not tremble—at least, my hands do not; yet how hot! the earth too seems to totter, and the globe turn faster than it should. My stomach heaves, as though it was overcharged; it is the air that so much oppresses me here." In this part of his malady he took several turns backwards and forwards the court with a disordered step; at last, looking upwards, and fetching his breath rapidly, he exclaimed—"It is past—I am better now: can this be fear, or was it a smatch of that

idea called conscience, which I have heard your honest plodding fools speak of, who, like muckworms, will crawl this life out, to stand a better chance for something to come hereafter? I have known men many troubles and privations here endure—and for what, but to leave a good name behind them, and have some pompous monument to mark their grave! Tush, tush! let me but here obtain that which I run such hazard to gain, I shall care not if each passing beggar spit upon my rotting-place, and say—‘There moulders a cunning villain.’ Here he paused for a short space, and looked earnestly on the vial he griped, and, with some embarrassment, continued—“Or was it the effect of this potion? if it was, how dreadful and powerful must its influence be to him that swallows it, when even my pressing the bottle thus should so egress its potency! fool that I am, to be thus alarmed at a thought!” He then committed the fatal vessel, with its contents, to the security of the bosom of his dress, and departed.

When Sadak saw the place clear, he, with much caution and dread, crept from his secrecy; his looks bespoke the terror of his soul—he gazed wildly around him, nor could he scarce believe he had life or reason proper; but clasping his hands above his head, and pouring forth a short ejaculation to his favourite deity, thus composed his mind—“ Yes, yes,” he said, “ too sure I live, and have my proper being; but this cannot be life, such as my nature was fostered in—oh, no, no, this cannot be earth! no, I must have passed hence, and this be the regions of the damned, and these two, bearing shape as men, be proper devils, plotting here to send their evil spirits forth to work in the other world; yet I have heard such deeds are practised on earth, and by men too, that say they are enlightened.”

At this part the poor Pagan seemed overcome in his musings, and, for a time, remained as a statue fixed: again recovering, he continued—“ To poison—murder men, and all for hire! Oh, gracious Pow-

ers! what happiness is ignorance like mine!—but yet it is for me to prevent all this diabolical work from taking place: am I preserved to be an instrument of good to my cruel oppressor? no, no! like wolves as they are, let them glut on each other's blood—it is their darling food; they fatten on infamy, and it is the commerce of their markets: honesty goes barefooted, while villainy struts in silks. Why should not I enter into their pursuits, and profit by my toil? yes, a beam of hope flashes across my mind, and beckons me to endeavour. Monrod, officer of the castle-guard, is a marked victim—him will I first search out; the great caliph too is marked. This looks like hope; but ere they have the secret from my heart, Zæ. and freedom shall be my reward.”

Sadak, being an entire stranger to the intricacies of the castle, knew not which way to turn that might lead him to a spot frequented, and where he might make the inquiries for those he wanted: at length he resolved to take the path Sebastian

had done so short time before. He, however, had not proceeded far, ere he entered a kind of retreat, where a transparent basin of water filled the centre, supplied by fountains, continually emitting the cooling element, and which rendered the shady bowers with which it was surrounded a refreshing and retired retreat from the heat and bustle of the more crowded parts of the palace. Stretched on a mat at some distance, he beheld two officers in conversation; he therefore determined to remain where he was until their conference should be broken up, before he requested the information he sought after, thinking it the most expedient to make as little stir as possible, lest his project should be marred.

The offices here mentioned were Monrod and Nulac, who were talking over affairs that had of late occupied so much attention; for since the removal of the prince Felix, Monrod had not once been without side the castle walls, but was continually on the alert, watching the proceedings of

Sebastian, hoping to catch some clue that might lead on his cherished determination of revenge. Seldom was the veteran seen to mix with the assembled soldiery ; but when any of his old comrades could be found alone, then would he catch what the general topic was, and how things in public were proceeding, while the more private information was gleaned from the never-failing volubility of captain Tabel : thus, from several such sources, was he enabled to draw his own conclusion, and seldom, in one of his experience, did it err. Nulac was his only confidant, if confidant he could be called—for the mind of Morrod had been so soured by disappointment, and rankled by miscarriages, that he looked distrustful on all the world. Nulac gave him the full particulars of the departure of Selinus and his daughter, but nothing had yet been heard of the outcast Felix. The Christians continued to leave the town in great numbers, and much embarrassment had been felt already among the traders on that account.

Sebastian's severity and exactions had so much perplexed the citizen artisans to raise the suddenly demanded levies, that a consternation pervaded, much to the detriment of commerce. The soldiers had become imperious and insolent in their behaviour to the towns-people—frequent street-broils were the consequence, which gave great annoyance to the peaceable inhabitants. Midnight assassinations were so frequent, that to find mutilated human bodies in the highway on the morning was so common an occurrence, that it hardly created surprise enough to prompt the quick to perform the charitable office of decently interring the dead. Public grievances were kept as much as possible from the knowledge of Elmuton by the vigilance of Sebastian, who took upon himself many important duties, and gave decisions of much weight, to prevent, as he himself gave out, the mind of the caliph being again depressed and overwhelmed with anxiety : indeed, the viceroy himself was so ruled by his officer, that the

office became more and more every day a nonentity, and, consequently, the name of Sebastian more dreaded, feared, or loved, as the capriciousness of fortune, interest, or necessity, dictated.

Nulac informed his friend, many new creatures had been raised to power and consequence by the influence of the great officer, and spies were lurking in every corner of the streets and castle: one stranger, he said, come from no one knows whither, was frequently seen in private with Sebastian; he seldom mixed with his fellows, and bore a strange mystery in his whole conduct; his outward appearance was far above the common rank, and he was called the friend of Sebastian; by no other appellation was he at present known, and thus he passed.

Sadak had now become impatient at the protracted discourse of the two veterans, and was about to make up to the bower where they were, when he was surprised by some one behind him; on turning, he discovered Tabel, but with a far



different deportment than when last they parted.

The little great man now felt the security of his situation; and perceiving his brother officers so near him, was determined to shew his whole consequence at once, and let the Pagan learn his authority by ocular proof, which he only knew before by being told it. After scraping his slippers along the marble pavement, and giving two or three loud hems, and throwing his huge pipe across his shoulder, he strutted up to the Pagan, and thus began his harangue—"How now, slave! what dost thou here? this part is only for those in power and office: thou seemest a bold rogue—I hope I shall not have to teach thee thy duty by coercive measures. I have made thee some promises, and condescended to talk to thee; but if thou dost presume, thou mayest forfeit my indulgences, and, at the expence of thy comfort, learn my authority: *who* dost thou think I am, or *what* dost thou think I am?"

The slave cast a contemptuous look

upon the thing, and answered—" *Who* thou art, I have not given my thoughts the trouble to discover—*what* thou art, would certainly much puzzle my ingenuity to find out. I may call thee man, as having the organs of speech, and knowing so perfectly well how to direct them in their exercise; but when I look upon thy *form*, then do my senses waver as to the reality of the being. If thou wast really intended for one of the human species, Nature was certainly drunk when she compounded thee, or else trusted thy formation to some unskilful assistant, and then, when finished, suffered thee to pass out of mere courtesy, or as a freak to further prove the diversity of her humour."

This answer most confoundedly scratched the spleen of the dwarf; he sidled, and trampled, much after the fashion of a young camel on a hot floor, when being taught to dance; then blowing out his cheeks, and making his great head appear like a full inflated balloon, he began his

speech—"Thou impudent Pagan heathen, if I was but to give the word, thy ungodly skin would be whipped from thy devilish bones, and right indeed would it serve thee; but go hence, before thou makest me further angry, and sing songs of praises to thy father Beelzebub for thy deliverance."

At this speech, Sadak laughed most tormentingly in the face of the irritated lump of self-conceit, and said, pointing at the same time to the reservoir—"Look, thou breathing boaster, at the finny creation in yonder clear water! mark with what pride they sport and play, and display their gold and silver-coloured scales to the glorious sun—if thou dost further open thy mouth to my discomfiture, I will hurl thee headlong amongst them; and although thy glittering, spangled dress may make thee known in thine own element, there thou wilt most certainly pass for a strange odd fish. But a truce to this foolery, and render thee and myself some service, by directing me where to find

Monrod, officer of the guard ; this do, and I will thank thee, and be grateful."

This, in some part, appeased the anger, and tickled the curiosity of the captain ; what was it possible a slave could have to do with the captain of the guard ? to find out the secret he was determined, if human art or cunning could do it. He then, as the most likely method, twisted his face into an odd sort of form, which he meant for a sort of smile, and said—" Slave, I do believe thee a merry wag, and, as such, shall pass thy raillery ; but what is thy mission with the seignior Monrod ? he is a morose and most reserved officer ; he will but ill brook thy volatile behaviour ; let me convey thy business, and fear not to let me be the bearer."

Sadak saw at once the drift of the dwarf, and answered—" That cannot be ; I have that belonging to me yet, of most inestimable worth to more than one about the castle ; it was dropped incautiously, where I picked it up. I have already

made up my mind with whom to deposit it; and if that cannot be done, then shall it remain in mine own custody.”

Little Tabel's hands involuntarily sought if his purse was in safety, then rummaged from one pocket to the other, to find if all was secure; but, however, no loss could he discover: it then struck him he might turn this account, some way or other, to his own interest, and replied—“ Good slave—I do forget thy name—if thou hast aught to sell, thou wilt not find a more liberal purchaser than I.”

To which Sadak answered—“ That I have I mean to sell—but thou canst never be the buyer; I came honestly by it, and honestly will I part with it.”

“ Good fellow,” replied Tabel, “ thou dost not understand our marketing; one man's gold is as good as another's; and I do command thee, if thou hast aught for sale, that I be dealt with as the first bargainer; for know I will not be trifled with; and if thou wilt not fairly give up that thou hast, I will report thee to those

who may force thy worth away, and give thee stripes for thy payment."

"What I have to dispose of is not a commodity for thy dealing," answered Sadak. "Know then, Turk, it is honesty, therefore useless to offer at thy mart."

At this moment they were joined by Monrod and Nulac, whom curiosity had brought thither, seeing the little eunuch in such close confab with a slave.

Tabel began to think Sadak was but fooling him, and did not wish the degradation to meet the knowledge of his fellow-officers; therefore turned about to salute his brethren; and when he mentioned the name of Monrod, Sadak caught the sound, and exclaimed—"Who answered to Monrod, officer of the guard?"

The old soldier instantly replied—"I am Monrod, and Monrod ever will remain."

Sadak, fixing his eyes on him, continued—"And, but for me, might not be Monrod long. If thou art Monrod, I have something for thy private hearing."

“Thou seemest a slave,” was the reply, “and may have some trick in this, to fool with me, and turn it to thy advantage.”

Sadak looked indignant at this, and said—“If what I have to say is not worth thy hearing, I can keep it.”

Monrod looked him full in the face, and replied—“This bluntness in thee should be honesty, and honesty should ever claim the ear, however galling to the hearer it may be: further to thy purpose, slave; and if thy errand merits a reward, thou shalt have it—honesty would have all men ever call me.”

Sadak said—“I have already told thee, what I have shall be given to thy ear only—thou hast now to please thyself.”

Monrod then bade Sadak follow him to his own apartment, which was on the instant complied with, and which doing added much to the chagrin of Tabel, who felt mortified that he was balked in finding out the secret.

The slave and officer were no sooner safely secreted in the privacy of Monrod's

chamber, than the following communication took place.—“First tell me, officer,” said Sadak, “if thou art indeed Monrod, chief of this castle guard?”

Monrod answered in the affirmative.

“And dost thou know a principal, called Sebastian, here?” he continued.

“I do,” was the reply, “for as subtle a villain as ever disgraced Cairo.”

“Then look well to thyself from him,” observed Sadak; “for treachery is awake, and hovers about this place, in a form so horrid, that, when it shall further appear, will terrify man almost past his believing. Hear me, Turk! as a short time since I lurked beneath the harem wall, I there overheard two fiends, yet shaped as men, in deep and frightful cogitations.”

Monrod listened, and, with much emotion, hastily inquired if he had learnt their names?

“One,” continued Sadak, “did seem a vassal unto the other; he that vassal was spoke the other, and named him Sebastian, but wished that he could hail him



caliph of Cairo, and which this night's plot was to accomplish.' Thou art marked too, old man.—But before I further proceed in this disclosure, swear to me, if oaths can bind thy word and promise, if I should save thine and Elmuton's life, you will restore to me that which you hold of mine?"

Monrod answered, with some surprise—"I hold of no man's that I should not have."

"I am," replied the Pagan, "your purchased slave, and my services little; I make but one to swell your pageant out, and magnify your vanity: thou hast robbed me of my freedom—yet more than freedom you hold here of mine."

The old soldier, with much impatience, said—"Good slave, disclose but that which your tongue so firmly binds, and name but that which your anxious wish would recover, and, by my honest word, thou shalt be satisfied to the full!"

Sadak continued—"Within the harem here, you one have got, that Heaven pro-

pitious had made mine own; and when this truth, this horrid truth, shall be developed all, let us then have free passage to pass to our native homes your avarice hath robbed us of—promise, and swear me this, Turk—then the important secret you unlock.”

The veteran’s anxiety was now assuming a fearful height, and, with much fervency, he exclaimed—“ By my holy faith, I swear to further thy wishes ! Now, Pagan, proceed to ease my racking bosom ; this tardiness of thine is but a mock of time and consequences.”

Sadak then resumed—“ Does the caliph this night hold a banquet?”

“ He doth so propose to do,” was the answer.

“ Then,” continued the slave, “ mind with whom *you* drink, and inspect narrowly *what* you drink ; for this same Sebastian hath charged his creature, whom he calls Saldan, with such an artful and ingenious poison, that is for ever to deprive the caliph Elmuton of his senses.”

The Mussulman, at hearing this, indignantly exclaimed, with voice half-choked—"Oh, the foul and hell-born serpent! ungrateful recreant! thus to bite the friendly hand that feeds and fosters him! but retribution is at hand—Yes, holy prophet of my fathers, retribution is at hand." Then turning on Sadak, he continued—"But, in the name of all thy hope here and hereafter, proceed truly, slave, with the damned plot—say, what of me? speak!"

Sadak proceeded.—"A deadly poison, Monrod, is for thee prepared—so subtle and certain, that stops for ever thy mortal career."

The astonished Turk crossed his hands on his breast, then devoutly and fervently turning towards the east, bowed his head thrice to the floor; his manner bespoke his gratitude, his fervency, his thanks: with a sort of silent whisper, he returned the great Father of all praise for his preservation. In prayer he remained prostrate for a short time. Sadak witnessed the scene with emotion; and taking advan-

tage of the opportunity, addressed the Throne of Grace through his own accustomed medium.

The period was too limited that passed thus: the rigid Mahometan and rude Pagan in the same room, bending, in prayer, to the same Supreme. Oh, what pity that ceremony should cost so much blood and misery! that different forms, when they lead to the same point, should make the image of God such a savage and incarnate devil!

Monrod was some time before he sufficiently recovered himself to be again able to address his preserver; he several times traversed the apartment, with his palm on his forehead, as deeply ruminating; now would he stop, as determined in his resolves, and as suddenly break off again, and hastily pace the floor. At length, as fixed what to do, he halted before Sadak, and thus spoke—"Now, my honest Pagan, to take this crocodile in his own snare: you, good fellow, shall with me straight to the caliph's banquet, and there,

before the weak, deluded Elmuton, shall this treacherous villain be unmasked ; all the hidden fiends that he to his aid may call, shall not protect him from my just revenge. Keep you near my person, Sadak, but observe a strict silence, until I shall give you the proper cue to speak ; for we have such a cunning demon to cope withal, that at every point must we be prepared. But fear not you ; I know Elmuton well ; and Sebastian I too long have known. Remain you here—I will about the castle, as usual, and when the time shall arrive, then will we, boldly and fearlessly, to the presence of the great and mighty viceroy, where you, for your services, shall meet a due reward, and be hailed Cairo's preserver—where Elmuton shall blush at his errors, I glut on my revenge, and Sebastian sink in his own infamy, the execration of men, and the sport of devils !

## CHAPTER III.



“ So where our wide Numidian wastes extend,  
Sudden the impetuous hurricanes descend ;  
Wheel thro’ the air, in circling eddies play,  
Tear up the sands, and sweep whole plains away.  
The helpless traveller, with wild surprise,  
Sees the dry desert all around him rise,  
And, smother’d in the dusty whirlwind, dies.”

THE little sportive muse has just jogged our recollection, and informed us, it is quite time to look after acquaintances, that have, for some space, not been heard of: if we have been remiss in our attentions, we most humbly beg pardon for the unpoliteness; and as the *ci-devant* prince Felix was left in the custody of four *black guards*, we must naturally suppose a gentleman of his breeding cannot be in the most comfortable situation imaginable; therefore, as most likely, from what has recently transpired, there will ultimately

be a most confounded hubbub about Mr. Elmuton's ears. we will refresh ourselves with a country excursion, that more strong we may return, to encounter our share of whatever is to happen at Grand Cairo.

We have already said, the season of the year that our adventures take place was the most sultry in this part of Egypt; and then generally prevails too such hot, yet boisterous hurricanes, that sometimes whole caravans, villages, and large tracts of fertile land, are buried beneath these immense bodies of sand, which, seen at a distance, resemble heavy and darkening clouds, and sometimes huge moving mountains. If passengers are overtaken by these phenomena, their only preservation likely is, by laying the face to the ground, and, as securely as possible, stopping every orifice, to prevent the gritty particles from penetrating, but which is almost an impossibility; for so subtle is their quality, that crevices, impervious nearly to light or air, cannot withstand the invasion of this oriental enemy.

When the dumb creation find one of these sand-storms approaching, by instinct they bury their nostrils as far into the surface of the earth as they can penetrate, and thus remain until the frightful visitation passes.

The season of the Fifty Winds, so called from the power held by that element for as many days, is marked by drought and pestilence, with all their concomitant attendants; yet, in this inhospitable time was the young and beautiful youth driven a marked outcast from the civil society of man, and sent upon a pilgrimage, the completion of which, under the restrictions laid upon him, no human capability could sustain. By night the traveller's only resource is to seek the shelter of the caravansary; but so sparingly are these poor accommodations scattered over the face of a country where, in many parts, roads are no guide, and where the passenger leaves no track behind, to lead the after wanderer, that often the open skies alone are



their covering, and their course traced by the heavenly bodies.

But be it understood, not such an awful picture as this does every part of this ancient and renowned country present; nearer to the banks of the wondrous and marvellous Nile, where sluices are cut, and the country rendered fruitful by this miracle of waters (if I may be allowed that expression, and I think I may from the wonder of its working)—where this happens, perhaps the face of earth can scarcely produce such another paradise.

Through both these extremes lay the path to be pursued by the subjects of our narrative; but before they have passed beyond the reach where kind nature seems not to have entirely forsaken the earth, let us hope that may befall which may enable them to combat with difficulties more even handed, and wherewithal to cope with extremities. But we must not pretend to open the book of fate, and pencil out our own destinies—that is wisely forbidden; and often is extravagant an-

icipation punished with disappointment. Thus ever did, and ever will run the mortal career of man.

After the burlesque, yet frightful cavalcade, consisting of the denounced Felix and his guard, had passed the outer walls of the citadel, no impediment offered to prevent their progress; stragglers were seen passing and repassing; but the conducting of a prisoner in any way mysterious was no novelty, and therefore created but little curiosity. Nor was it the season of the year for the road they had to pursue to be much frequented; it was the highway common for the inland Christian merchants to travel generally, but no caravan or public transaction being now on foot, the course was left unmolested.

Day broke early upon them: the intense heat of the sun soon rendered travelling a toilsome task; and at the distance of about seven English miles, Cairo's towers from this side had disappeared; when the Arabs consulted, and agreed to

halt until the heat of day should subside. For this purpose they sought the refreshing shelter of a small grove, composed of the locust, date, fig, olive, and palm trees ; here they made a kind of encampment—the mules were unburthened, the men disencumbered of their trappings, and the dejected Felix commanded to remain at a short distance from the tent of his keepers, and to herd with their beasts, in the best shelter he could procure.

The disconsolate youth replied not to this degradation, but threw his wearied frame beneath the spreading branches of an olive, the unripe fruit of which served poorly to moisten his parched palate ; and, as a further relief, he threw off his pilgrim's outer garment ; and, as it fell to the earth, what was his surprise to find several hard-baked small cakes, highly seasoned with spices and garlic, and of a most satisfying nature, obtrude from the side lining ! In his travel his mind was so occupied, he scarcely noticed what his habiliments were ; but now that his fin-

seemed finally cast, he became more tranquil and resigned. But nature, wearied with excess, was fast exhausting within him, and the sight of this unexpected and needful refreshment prompted him to partake. As he was recovering his garment, he further discovered a flask, filled with wine of the most nourishing quality; of this too he sparingly and cautiously refreshed himself, taking the utmost care to prevent the observation of his hardened keepers, who were revelling and banqueting within their tent, and killing time with the sport of the dice. He inwardly returned a prayer for this unlooked-for benefit, but knew not what mortal to name in his benediction for this timely support.

But it is quite necessary the readers should be let into the secret. It may be remembered, the renowned captain Tabel took upon himself the office of *robing* the out-cast ere he left the octagon court of the castle, and the great anxiety he exhibited lest any one should offer to assist him in the accomplishment; how he succeeded

so far has long appeared. The thought struck him to do thus when first the young prince was condemned, that he would somehow or other be instrumental in his endeavour to supply the calls of nature for the first part of his journey, for he cherished the hope some cause or other might transpire to defeat the intentions of his enemies; and in case he should be detected in his doing; and his scheme miscarry, he had a cunning subterfuge and thumping lie at his great tofigue's end to answer all purposes. He intended, if this secret hoard should chance to be discovered, to say it there must have remained since the last feast of the *Ramadan*, when the dress ~~was~~ worn in masquerade by some about the court; thus he run but little hazard, to render a most important service to his beloved young friend, and former benefactor; and never was poor poet more pleased when he received a five-pound note for a work, which might produce to the purchaser some hundreds, than was this pigmy knight of duplicity

delighted when he saw his invention succeed, and the gates closed on it; and never would he have ceased talking of it, had not the misery of Felix's last appearance driven the recollection from his mind.

No particular occurrence took place worth recording to our travellers, until towards the closing of the third day of their departure from the city of Cairo; one of the Arabs, however, seemed somewhat touched by the helpless situation of the wretched Felix, and would occasionally let drop, as by accident, from the panniers of his mule, a piece of provision, or a little dried fruit, and by his manner make his prisoner understand the purpose it was for. This, with his own store, in some degree sustained nature, much to the astonishment of his guards.

Twice or thrice had the prince perceived one of the Arabs let loose a carrier pigeon, charged with a billet, which, as soon as it gained its favourite element, took its departure in the direction of Cairo. This was a secret order of Sebas-

tian's to the guard, and conveyed him private information how the expedition was going forward.

They had now reached nearly to the margin of the yellow desert, and where the wretched Felix looked forward to be his grave. His feet had long since become raw with walking, and after resting a short time, his lower extremities would swell and stiffen, that each succeeding starting became more and more difficult.

Their distance from the capital was now about thirty English miles, and breaking off in a direction where vegetation visibly diminished, and the track become more perplexing. As nearer they drew toward the fearful and barren plain, the greater was their danger of sand-storms, and the violence of the elements.

The lamp of day was declining, and the Arabs hurrying forward to make the last place of security formed by human hands, where they intended to rest awhile ere they commenced their march across the sandy way: they had yet some short

distance to go; a hot and parching wind sprung up; the atmosphere darkened by clouds of dust, arising from the west, which threw such a veil before the receding sun, as damped the intensity of his rays, yet left the orb perceptible, and shewed it in all the varied colours of the rainbow, with a'dinamed brilliancy.

Fortunately, this hurricane passed ~~so~~ far on their side, as little to annoy them. A sullen stillness reigned over all for a short time, as though nature had suspended her functions; but not long did this calm remain—the vivid lightning flashed and sported in sheets upon the thirsty surface of the sand—angry clouds in quick succession rose—the distant thunder was heard murmuring in the air, and all surrounding animation appeared astounded. The terrified mules faltered and groaned with thirst: the Arabs, superstitious and ignorant, passed their horrible curses on Felix, and upbraided him with sorcery, and being instrumental in causing so dire a tempest. When he offered his prayers



and supplications to Heaven, they charged him with making incantations, and raising spells. Each succeeding peal and horror-creating crash provoked their blasphemy. At length, tired with their foul imprecations, they insisted on his advancing some distance.

This was done. The infidels then unstrapped their luggage, and sheltered themselves in a hastily-erected tent.

Felix cast his swimming eyes around; no place was to be found to screen his devoted body—a hard and rugged rock only served him to throw his weary limbs upon, and there he lay exposed to the open face of heaven, to bear the brunt of conflicting elements. The better to secure his tender organs of sight from the relentless and impetuous blasts of the angry clouds, he had folded his arms, and lay prostrate on his face; while thus, his whole mind and soul absorbed in prayer, such a violent concussion shook the earth, that he started on his feet, supposing the awful hour of ge-

neral annihilation was at hand. Before he had well recovered the shock and consternation, his ears were assailed with dreadful cries and human shrieks. Suddenly he turned to where he had left his guards. Oh, what a soul-appalling sight was there! The thick canvas-covering of the Arabs' tent lay a mouldering smother upon the ground; the four beasts were prostrate; two Arabs stood fixed as statues. His first impulse was to give assistance. Like the wind in swiftness he flew over the space between them; but when he gained the spot, in turn became almost petrified at the sight before him: the mules, with eyes distended, and tongues forced outside their gaping mouths, lay dead, and distorted in form. One Arab was seen with half his body obtruding beyond the cindered remains of the tent, breathless and gone.

This was the first care of the affrighted youth, to extricate the spectacle from the burning embers, doing which he discover-

ed his comrade beneath the mass of smoke and ashes; him he also brought to the light. Ah, what a sight was there to behold! his stricken limbs were distorted; his eyes almost forced from their sockets; his garments rent and torn from part of his body; and the vital spark had been wrested in a moment from both, by the imperceptible force of the penetrating flash. The two survivors stood as ghastly monuments of horror.

It appears they had left the tent but a minute before, to look for their charge, when angry Jove darted his fire in that direction, and hurled their companions with a momentary blast into eternity!

Felix pondered over the scene in awful contemplation, and inwardly praised the peculiar Providence he seemed under, with all his accumulated misery. It was some time before the two wretched men sufficiently recovered to be sensible of their situation, and the terrible visitation that had deprived them of their comrades and mules.

The storm was now subsiding, and the wind abating ; and as the guards became awake to the deprivation they were doomed to endure, they seemed to seek no consolation in prayer, or, with becoming fortitude, bow to the Divine dispensation.. After taking a full survey of their calamity, they threw themselves on the ground, and wept most piteously. When this fit had worn itself out in excess, they again commenced their abuse on the unhappy prisoner, and but for a kind of awe they now felt toward him, as they would for a renowned sorcerer, he would have fallen a victim to their blood-thirsty rage. A trembling fear took possession of them, and they dreaded to remain on the fatal spot of death. They left it, commanding Felix to follow at some distance. They shortly entered a ravine, and had not proceeded far, ere a sense of their calamity again aroused them to almost desperation.

At a little distance was seen the ruinous remains of a building, that by its splendid

decay, bespoke it once ennobled, but now so far gone, that no human being was supposed to lodge there. The wolves had awoke, and their distant howling bespoke the horrors of night were fast approaching.

The Arabs here remained some paces behind, and appeared to be in earnest and intent consultation, now and then casting such a horror-striking glance toward their charge, as filled the breast of the distressed prince with the most fearful apprehensions.

The storm seemed hushed but for a moment, and the contending skies, as if refreshed by the short suspension of tumult, again rattled through the atmosphere; and howling echo gave a double dread, as it responded in the hollow ravine.

Felix contemplated this wonderful work of nature, and in retrospection viewed over again the scene he had so lately witnessed in dreadful reality. Now his mind felt the full force of his newly-embraced opinions, and with a solemn fervency de-

livered his overcharged bosom in the following address :—

“ Oh, gracious Heavens ! calm your angry mood,  
And make up this dreadful contention ;  
Each element seems the other to beset,  
And what comes between the fearful crash  
Finds annihilation certain.  
The crash, when spent, what awful silence reigns !  
No cooling breath now stirs to fan the heat.  
Here let unbelievers find their answer,  
And with the insulted Deity make peace,  
Who thus in fearful voice so loud proclaims  
A dire day shall come, time shall be no more,  
Men with fear shall quake, the earth with fervency  
Shall pass away, and this our nature sink  
To nothingness and oblivion all.”

As the devout prince was delivering this ejaculation, his savage keepers eyed and watched him with demoniac scrutiny, and when he had finished, by turns they passed and repassed him, giving such looks as conveyed to the mind of the poor outcast they had at last determined on his destruction. He felt resigned to his fate, and yet endeavoured as much as possible, by his manners, not to let it be perceived by his brutal attendants.

Again they whispered, and when coming face to face with their victim, the foremost thus accosted him — “Curses light on thy fell and bewitching faith, that raised this storm to our destruction and our overthrow! Two such brave Arabs as thy infernal spells have destroyed, Egypt in her pride before could never boast.”

When he had ended this curse, he darted such a look on the prince, as made the wretched youth shudder. The other Arab caught up the strain, and continued — “The infernal imp hath moved the angry spirits by his hellish invocations! nor will they now be pacified, or remain long still, until we have sacrificed him to their revenge! — Thou devil,” he said, at the same time lowering his brow, and levelling his sight, that was so dreadfully charged with malignant ire, full on the prince, “I have a mind to cut thy throat at once, to still this storm, and rid ourselves of such a dangerous task!”

Felix, with as much composure as he

was able to summon, answered the frightful savage—"As thou hopest for mercy, fellow, stain not thy soul with my innocent blood, nor clog thy fate with so foul a deed. Have patience but for a little, and thy orders will be fairly executed; short will be the time ere I shall die from want—my parched tongue now cleaves to my festered lips, in need of moisture, and this overwhelming heat my respiration stops."

"Fools!" cried the ferocious guard, "fools that we were to let you stray before, when that fatal and sultry blast robbed us of our comrades and our mules! Had you but fallen, all had then been well; but no, the fiends that raised this storm by thy conjuration, sent it alone for our distress."

The soul of Felix recoiled at this open and barefaced blasphemy, and he replied—"Say not so, Arab, nor live thus in error; believe it was the work of angry Heaven, who knew the inward machinations of thy mind against my unoffending life; believe it sent as a warning of thy danger;



then proceed no further, but ask forgiveness for the past, and be grateful to a supreme power, that thy guilty life is spared."

At this the Arab's anger distorted his sable countenance, and he looked an evil spirit of another world; almost choking with rage, he exclaimed—"Bid us ask forgiveness for our tardiness, and, as a reparation, send at once thy wicked life afloat, thou apostate! changing thy faith hath so offended Heaven, as well as thy father, Elmuton; and now by both art thou discarded! thou hast sold thy soul to devils, and now are they become tired of waiting for their prey, and have raised this storm in contention with thy guardian imps!"

The prince now clearly saw their aim and fixed determination was his life; he felt it, as it were, already escaped, and for a moment answered not: he recovered, and once more accosted his unrelenting keepers—"This fearful storm was raised by the Power above, and be assured, Arab, those below have no power in it."

He then clasped his hands in an agony,

and cast his eyes upward. Thus he remained, when the infuriated monster vehemently drew his weapon from his girdle, and, with frightful vociferation, cried—“What! again at thy hellish incantations! I’ll hear no more—but thus at once to stop this strife, and thy impious breath——”

Here he was about to make a furious attack on the defenceless youth, who replied—“Hold! hold thy arm, and be not such a coward! Thou seest I have no weapon to defend my wretched life, or thou shouldst not have it thus cheaply.”

The insulting and merciless tormentors, when they heard this, burst into a taunting and loud laugh, replying—“Well said, saucy renegado! Art thou become so brave to dare us two? We accept thy challenge; so take my sword, and have a buffet with my fellow; and then if thou fall, be thy death on thine own head!”

Felix consented.

This well suited the Arabs, who doubted not to make an easy conquest; and as

the prince received the weapon, and drew himself up to his proper bearing, the twain savage desperadoes chuckled with each other, and with much mockery and tantalizing ceremony prepared for the onset.

The superior manner of the young prince's bringing up had given him a knowledge of all the masterly exercises, such as riding, tilting, fencing, and the like; but at the latter he was generally allowed to be preeminent, and much excel his companions. But this was when the spirit of health and comfort beamed around, and when happiness held her empire o'er his bosom. What then was now his chance, with the sad reverse? desperation only—desperation, with nought but the vital spark expiring on the brink of eternity to second its efforts. His arm was enervated by famine and disease; his courage trampled on by infamy and brutal usage. No darling hope for his buckler—no fair prospect of happiness for his reward. Alone he stood, at fearful odds, weak and debilitated. But as the embers

of some once-renowned city, which the cruel hand of tyranny had levelled in ashes to the ground, so stood the once-proud and lusty prince, but now, alas! the lost and disregarded Felix. His quivering spirit made an effort, which arose with a flush in his sallow cheek, and fire in his sunken eye. With a front and valour that somewhat startled his opponents, and a determined voice, he cried aloud—"Come on, thou foul and damned fiend! fain would I bid thee stand as a man, but that thou art a disgrace to the species. Come on, infidel!"

The Arab drew himself into a ferocious attitude, and with savage exultation exclaimed—"Now, thou foul and accursed *Christian*, stand in thine own defence! Be bold, *devil*!"

By a dexterous defence the prince parried the first thrust, and threw his antagonist so completely off his guard, that ere he could recover, the weapon of Felix had passed through his neck; this was followed with such quick receding ac-

tion, that the youth was far enough back, and waiting to receive the Arab's second assault. This proved a faint one; the prince made a desperate return, and buried the still-reeking blade deep in the sable bosom of his enemy : he shrieked and fell. His companion was astounded, and leant over the dying body as if stupified.

The prince was overcome and breathless, and saw not the fair opportunity that offered, for him to rid himself for ever of his remaining foe. The departing Arab gave a horrid groan, and his polluted spirit fled.

The survivor, half frantic, now wrested the sword from the dead man's gripe, and turning like a wounded hyena on the undismayed youth, uttered, with a ghastly grin—" Blast thy fiend-protected fortune ! thou shalt not live long to boast thy victory."

He then began a most desperate encounter, and laid about him with such fury, as beat down all the science of poor

Felix, who early received a wound in the sword arm, that bled profusely.

They had, during the time of altercation and scuffle, come nearly to the isolated ruins, in the vacant crevices of which the clang of their arms vibrated, and seemed to make a doublefold encounter. The unfortunate youth now began to feel most distressingly the superiority of his antagonist; he found his strength failing—his spirit despairing, and his breath ebbing. To swallow was now become impossible; his sight swam, and, as a last effort of nature, he made a desperate energetic blow, that felled the Arab, and with its force brought him to the ground also. They both lay panting; a beam of hope flashed across his mind; but it was too late—he found himself going; one drop of drink, to relax his burning throat, might perhaps save his life, but that, alas! was not to be had. As he sat and leaned on his elbow, his eyes unwittingly caught the streaming wound in his arm: the blood flowed fresh and copiously; he applied his parch-

ed lips—the gash poured forth balsam; he sucked deep—he swallowed; again his respiration flowed—his sight became clear, and again he lived: he strove to rise—alas! his limbs refused their office, and again he sunk to the earth; his senses lived now too acutely.

The Arab was recovering, and near him, who now looked round, and saw his victim prostrate: he started on his legs, and placing one foot on the breast of his subdued captive, like a basilisk he fixed his eyes on him: he spoke not, but grinned, and with an hysterical laugh held his weapon high in the air; and, as determined to suspend the fatal stroke until he had glutted his eyes on the miserable condition of the victim in his clutches, he stood thus fixed in hellish exultation.

Felix had ceased to speak or move. He was dead to this world.

## CHAPTER IV.



Child, thou dost little know this wicked world.  
When once misfortune lowers, then is the time  
To prove our friends—I've ever found it so.  
But when the sunbeams of power shine full,  
Vice is virtue call'd—infamy divine.      *Original.*

THE Arab stood thus, enjoying his brutal triumph with a Satanic satisfaction, when a voice from the broken and decayed parapet above his head, with a hoarse accent and loud, cried—"Hold! hold there! and let some one see fair play."

The savage was startled; and ere he could recover from his consternation, a motley-dressed and curious figure of a man leaped down on him, and in an instant he found himself disarmed. So suddenly was he assailed, he offered no resistance, but staring, remained as one struck dumb.



A shrill whistle from the stranger echoed throughout the surrounding space, and struck so forcibly on the senses of the prostrate prince, as to make him start, which the Arab observing, exclaimed, in a rage—"Curses on thy infernal art, that raised this imp to thy aid, at the very crisis that thy black and charged soul was taking its flight to perdition!"

There had, for a long space of time, lurked in these ruins we have spoken of, a horde of gipsies, that had held their residence with such secrecy, as to be totally, or nearly so, unknown to the inhabitants of the country, which race of people are now to be found in almost every civilized part of the world, but came originally from Egypt, and still remain there in great numbers, using many arts of a mysterious nature, and have great influence over their credulous countrymen, and, most likely, will still remain so to do, while superstition holds so strong an ascendancy. But most probably we may have a pretty deal to do with the head gentleman of

this fraternity, that so unexpected and unceremoniously descended on the Arab, as well as ourselves, we will therefore no further digress at present; but suffice it to say, that his name is *Kilrest*, and king of the gipsies.

When the Arab had finished speaking, and threw out such an uncourteous slur on his majesty Kilrest, that personage, bridled up his consequence, and strutting toward him, brandished the wrested sword, and with mightiness of manner in his way, answered—"Come, come, seignior Arab, be quiet, or curb that unhallowed tongue of thine; you, perhaps too soon for your comfort, may learn the authority I am here invested withal; and, for thy information, let me tell thee I am a king, and this is my territory: and see, some of my queer court are now at hand."

At this moment a group of odd-looking fellows, in the costume of their master, appeared issuing from the ruins, at the sight of whom the Arab sunk into despondency, and hung his head, nor strove

to make any resistance. Kilrest only pointed towards the savage, and he was instantly surrounded, and became a well-guarded prisoner.

His ragged majesty next directed his attention to poor Felix; he was soon raised from the ground, and restoratives plentifully applied; and when his senses were sufficiently recovered, his first words were—"Great God, for this deliverance I thank thee!"

"So, so," quoth the gipsy chief, "you are no Turk, I find, or you would call upon the holy prophet: but look to him well, you ragged rascals," he continued, addressing his attendants, "the while I have some talk with this dingy gentleman." He then gave the sword he held to one of his dependents, and putting his hands behind him, and coming to the front of the crest-fallen black, said—"And you, if my judgment err not, must be an Arab. Oh, I hate all Arabs! learn that, for thy future consolation. Ye were all ever bitter enemies to our independant

race.—Ay, what !” he continued, casting an eye on the dead savage, and turning the body over with his foot—“yes, yes, sure enough was this a fellow of thine, but gone before thee, to<sup>t</sup> tell the great devil, thy father, that thou art coming, and will soon be with him.”

The poor Arab seemed perfectly to understand this laconic speech, and answered it with much bitterness.—“I wish the great devil of devils had thee fast bound !”

“In that wish I do not doubt thee,” was the reply : “there, I think, thou tellest truth indeed ; but as I have never been on such friendly terms with the gentleman you spoke of, I cannot think of visiting him yet ; but lest he should entertain company to-night, you shall quickly go, and add to his party.—Come, some of you—the stoutest in the trade,” speaking to his followers, “and slip the bow-string round this saucy rebel’s neck, and hurl him, with his companion, into the chasm which the last earthquake made, and let them there, for a little while, find

a bed—we soon shall hear when supper-time is come; the hyenas will, laughing, say grace over them, and thank us, howling loud, for their good meal.”

It seems the monarch was a mighty lord, and much to be feared; for no sooner were his orders given, than execution took place; and before Felix could resume his strength sufficiently to plead for his hardened late keeper, which he was preparing to do, he saw him laying alongside his companion in iniquity, and, like him, a breathless corse.

This precipitate deprivation of the mortal faculties, and sudden transportation to another world, much discomposed the languishing youth, and made no very favourable impression of the gipsy's government, and most heartily he inwardly wished himself beyond their jurisdiction.

Kilrest, in a peremptory manner, asked what the executioners were loitering about, that they did not instantly fulfil the rest of his commands?

This was enough; and soon, both the

quick and the dead disappeared down a turning of the ravine, and left the distressed prince and powerful king alone.

Felix had by this time much recovered his strength, and in that respect comfortable. He turned toward the gipsy, and with courtesy addressed him.—“I am very poor, my good preserver, and, for the present, my thanks alone must be thy reward.”

“Ay,” replied Kilrest, “I am sorry you are poor, for we gipsies, at this time, are very poor, and fain would borrow, for the state’s good. We are not particular in that way, when we meet passengers that are wealthy, though they afterwards call it robbing them, to take a portion of what they have.—But tell me, youth, whence came you, and where going to?”

In a sorrowful voice the disconsolate youth answered—“Believe me, friend, I know not where to go; but whence I came—alas! that recollection almost maddens me!”

The ragged monarch at this evinced

much curiosity, and further asked—"Then tell me who you are, and what your parents' called?"

Felix betrayed much emotion, and knew not what to say; but, at length, thought it best, under the present circumstances, to declare at once his birth, and thus replied—"I was once proud to call the great caliph Elmuton my father, and then was Cairo my happy home."

His kingship, on hearing this, looked archly in the face of the prince, and said—"Ay, ay—I understand; that delicate face and handsome frame of thine, has been thy ruin: but never mind—the next time you offer it to the markets of the fair ones, be more cautious; you are not the first whose vanity has got them into a scrape. Physiognomy is my trade, and when I look on thine, I can find no lineaments there that would tend to another's discomfiture; so be of good heart, and thank thy lucky stars for present deliverance. I had witnessed thy behaviour from the first onset, and thy bravery pleased

me; yet still I had rather the last black rascal had fallen by thy hand, because he merited it; but we have sent the pair home between us, so think no more about it. But didst thou not say Cairo was once thy home, and the caliph thy father? well met, townsman! Cairo too was once my home, and *my* father held an office there much higher than Elmuton's throne."

"Indeed!" said the prince, much surprised at this declaration: "thy parent higher in Cairo than the caliph!"

"Truly so, indeed," was the answer; the gipsy, at the same time, shewing much shrewdness in his countenance. "Yes, young seignior, I speak truly, for he wound the clock up daily on the mosque's high top."

This somewhat disturbed the features of Felix, notwithstanding his misery, and he replied—"Thou art a happy trifler."

"But praised be his shade!" continued Kilrest, "he died when I was but young, and my mother, alas! soon, in good spirits, followed him."



“They are no doubt happy,” was the answer; “and, indeed, an envious end was hers, to die so full of faith.”

“Not a very envied end, my good friend,” replied the quizzical ragamuffin, “although she died quite full: you shall hear—one morning, the merchants on Bulac’s quay detected her pilfering their stores; they had long suspected some one, and taking her in the fact, although it was her first offence, they, without farther ceremony, poor soul! plunged her headlong into a cask of brandy, and thus she went off in that she loved.”

Poor Felix knew no longer how to combat with his feelings: this ridiculous vein of the witty king but ill-accorded with his troubled mind. His being brought up a Turk, it is natural to suppose he had imbibed many of their common follies, among which predestination stands the foremost, and so great a scope for the exercise of the cunning proverbial to the gipsies in all parts of the world: this weakness now arose in his mind, and he

thus accosted Kilrest—"They say your fraternity know well the mystic art—can prophecy, and truly tell the fate of man, or when he shall die?"

"That, truly, can we indeed at times," was the answer. "Now, for instance, had you a purse of gold, and we demanded it, and you refused to give or lend without force, and we, for using force, run in danger of the laws by your information, I could tell to the moment how long you would live; or if you had any one you wished put aside, give but a good round sum and they will trouble you no more. I tell thee, we have a certain mystic manner with us, that we can prophecy as we are paid; but without fee, I can tell thee that thou art poor, hungry, and weary—I can too further foretell that thou must shortly have food and rest, or thou wilt certainly expire for want."

Felix now began to discover his deliverer was more knave than villain, and when he had made known this last won-

derful disclosure, the prince answered, with a smile—"Thou hast truly said, and most fortunately hit my wants."

Kilrest said—"Come, come, bestir thee then, and I will introduce thee into my palace, and to my court; and when thou art further recovered, more of thy history must I learn. Ascend this broken rock with me—it is the path to my royal residence; but like that leading to most thrones, full of difficulties, and hard to climb, unless thou hast some one to conduct thee that hath often trod the way, and whose interest removes obstacles. The entrance thou seest is somewhat like my garments, ragged on the outside, and confoundedly threadbare within."

The enfeebled youth was then led through several intricate and dilapidated passages, but here and there shewing the remains of much splendour and rich sculpture; at length they ascended a mouldering flight of steps, and crossed a court nearly choked up with fragments of marble pillars and broken statues, whose work-

manship bespoke their worth in former times, and whose antiquity demanded the veneration of the present generation. The costly resemblances of emperors and kings, mighty in their day, and whose statues were erected to perpetuate the love and admiration of their subjects, or to feed their vanity, now lay scattered and destroyed, alike by the hand of time or wantonness: thrown was the proud pedestal, to be trampled on by the rude barbarian, and their beauties disregarded by the ignorant. Where once emperors revelled, and kings banqueted, in all the imperial luxury and magnificence of the eastern golden world, was now made the herding-place of the most despicable of the human race—where the high-bred courser mantled and snorted, and filled the noon-tide air with neighings, and beat the ground, impatient for its mighty lord to vault into the saddle, and be borne to battle's conflict, was now become the lurking-place of beasts of prey, that made the hor-

rors of midnight doubly horrible by their howling.

The apartment where the prince was ushered into seemed to be far below the level of the surface of the earth, and was used as the common hall of the fraternity : here were seated three or four, that much puzzled the mind of Felix to discover what they were, until summoned by their ruler, in the name of women, to prepare bed and board for a benighted traveller of distinction. The creatures arose from their squatting postures, and acknowledged the presence of the visitor with rude courtesy.

Women indeed ! alas ! no love-enticing smile lived on their countenances—no penetrating glance at first sight, to captivate the assailed, and read love's preface—no delighting silver sounds sprung from their organs, to charm the ear and fascinate the senses ! oh, sad reverse ! more like mummies from the deep sepulchral pits than living beings ; hoarse were their voices, yellow and wrinkled were their skins,

sunk and inexpressive their eyes, emaciated their forms, and their whole contour forbidding. From the perpetual smoke of the never-extinguished lamps, whose trimming sent forth the most disagreeable stench, the arched ceiling and excavated walls were become black and sooty; the broken statues, some headless, some divided in the middle, some half thrown from their base, and reclining against the side, made the interior of this abode look like a cavern of evil spirits and the forge for enchantments—oh, horrible contrast to gilded chambers and sparkling saloons! where was profusely spread all that art or fancy could divine, to charm the senses and make life a toy: yes, in this sad opposite was the beautiful youth Felix, glad to partake the coarse meal for his sustenance, and instead of the gold-trimmed velvet couch to loll and stretch upon, thankful was he now for the straw pallet to rest his wearied and disordered limbs upon.

The poor female creatures had no pretensions to boast, save that their being of

the softer sex; yet kind, in their way, they seemed, and much moved the commiseration of the prince: it appeared they scarcely ever ventured beyond the confines of the ruins, and were wives to the principals of this society. They soon spread a board before their guest, consisting of dried meats and fruits, and a bowl of milk; this made a sumptuous repast for the fatigued youth, and of which he plentifully partook. While the meal was going on, the remainder of this banditti (we dare not call them by any softer appellation) entered, and made their report to the superior, as to the disposal of the dead bodies; they then seated themselves, and soon the fumes of strong and coarse tobacco impregnated every part, and made a thick atmosphere.

Kilrest inquired if they had seen any thing about worth looking after, and whether a band of Arabs, that had infested thereabouts for the last few days, had disappeared? He was answered, **nothing** had been discovered of them since the

evening before the last, which seemed to give general satisfaction; for it happens, there exists between these tribes of wandering Arabs and hordes of gipsies an inveterate animosity, making out the old proverb perhaps, "two of a trade," &c.; for while the gipsies were but cunning and petty thieves, the Arabs were open and desperate renegadoes, and frequently would hover about in such numbers as to attack considerable caravans, and ransack villages; and wherever these opposite tribes met, however unguarded or defenceless, they destroyed each other like savage and unnatural beasts their kind: this accounts, in some measure, for the conduct of Kilrest to the last guard of Felix.

The hour of retiring for the night was fast approaching, and his imperious majesty declared his intention of once more visiting the heights of the ruins ere he went to rest, to see if aught was stirring: but first turning to the prince, and thrusting the dirty end of an enormous pipe, just taken, reeking hot, from his own



chops, into the mouth of his guest, bade him make free, and depend on his security: he then left the cavern, as we shall do for the present, if you please, gentle reader—*yèw*, gentle reader, once more.

When Selinus and Orinda departed from the city of Cairo, they were soon informed the road Felix was travelling; they surmised the route would be, if they acted right by him, through the ravine we have lately described, and across the Yellow Desert, this being a sort of passage to the latter, and the path mostly frequented; indeed, had they taken any other, it must have been over barren mountains, and many more difficulties must they have encountered; therefore the Christian father and daughter travelled on some distance over the fertile banks of the Nile, before they cut across the country into the track leading to the famous ravine: but when they came within one march of the destination where they hoped to gain satisfactory intelligence of their beloved son and husband, they were

surprised by a band of Arab robbers, who conducted them to their retreat; and notwithstanding the outlaws were assured their captives were only *travelling pedlars*, yet they made free to keep their mules and all their luggage—thus were they deprived of their hidden riches, and their every comfort.

Much consultation took place among the freebooters, as to the disposal of their terrified prisoners; the man, they said, was much too old to fetch them any thing in the slave market, and the boy, as they supposed, too puny to be worth their trouble.

While their victims were in this horrid dilemma, the captain of the gang arrived, with two or three followers, who had been on another route reconnoitring: in him Selinus recognised a person with whom he had had considerable dealing, in the way of traffic, on the quays of Bulac: this answered some little purpose as to their personal safety, but their effects, whether

great or small, belonged to the banditti at large, the chief having the command only; as it was through his interposition they were detained for a time, and then set at liberty, with a few pieces of coin and some provision, the bounty of the captain alone; then being put on the right track, they were suffered to depart.

When they had clearly got rid of the Arab robbers, their distressing situation appeared before them in all its horrors: to return was impossible—to proceed, a dreadful uncertainty, or perhaps death, awaited them: one chance only remained, which was to make the best of their way through the ravine, at the furthest end of which stood a poor caravansary, that always supplied travellers with water and things needful for the passage over the Yellow Desert, and at which place they were in hopes of hearing whether or not Felix had been conveyed that way—or if he had, the consequences attending their late calamity forbade their possibility of following and ever seeing him again.

Orinda's strength and fortitude in a great measure supported her drooping sire; they were overtaken by a branch of the same storm witnessed so dreadfully by Felix, when about two miles distant from the passage, and endeavoured with all their might to gain that place, for many reasons.

Selinus indulged the thought, that he should very likely meet with some merchant on the travel with whom he was acquainted, and thus gain a temporary assistance; or perhaps a small and extra caravan might be lodging there, waiting for passengers sufficient to pay the expence of crossing the sands, on their way to Thebes: with this prospect they hurried on, occasionally obliged to stop, and seek shelter, until the hurricane passed; and about the time the prince entered the ravine at one part, they must have entered it at another, and not above a mile apart.

They were proceeding up an acclivity, when Orinda held her finger on her lip, and forcibly detained her father, and se-

creted themselves behind a projecting piece of rock, while a party of ragged-dressed men took their way by a path at a short distance: they travelled in perfect silence, and had got clearly out of sight ere the Christians ventured from their secrecy—for their late detention and robbery had made them cautious, lest they should again have the misfortune to fall into such bad company; but when the strangers had disappeared but a little, they blamed themselves for suffering them to depart thus, as most likely, by their appearance, they were a party of guides, and on their way to the place of rendezvous; but, in fact, reader, they were our gipsies, returning from putting the dead Arab guards to bed in the chasm, as they were commanded by the king their master.

Selinus aroused himself, and advised his daughter to take the track of this company of men, as it would assuredly lead to some human habitation, where they might beg a shelter for the night, if not at once, and by a nearer way, bring them to the

caravansary. This was agreed upon; and with as much speed as possible they endeavoured to overtake the group; but, alas! that consolation was denied them, for soon the speed of the men carried them far beyond their reach, and they lost sight of them among the cavities: thus disappointed, they wandered from place to place, and nought of human voice or being could they discover—strangers too to the intricacies of the place, the storm, at intervals, rumbling over their heads, and the heat quite oppressive: little supposing how near they were to the resting-place of the beloved Felix, they threw themselves on a heap of broken rock, and fragments of the ruins, for darkness had now rapidly overspread the skies, and the gloominess of the place where they lay added to their own inward dreariness. The poor old man threw himself along, and with a heart-broken voice addressed his daughter—"Come, come, my poor child, here must we submit to our fate—I can no further; and never in my days

do I remember so awful a storm as this has been : it seemed the fates were all at busy work ; the winds did grieve as dreadful mourning yells, as though murder was their handicraft. Come, come, poor thing, and sit thee down by me."

Orinda, taking the hand of her sorrowful father, said—" Dear, dear parent, bear up but until the morning—the storm is nearly past, and once again we begin to feel the gentle cooling breeze." She then drew from her bosom a small flask, the bounty of the Arab chief, and continued—" Take a little wine to refresh thy parched mouth, for here some hours must we take our rest."

The afflicted sire answered—" Oh, here would I take my long, long rest, but for thee, my poor unfortunate child ! oh, had we now but some little riches ! we then perhaps might journey on to some distant place, and purchase shelter, which if now we were but near, we must beg for charity : even this poor caravansary, that cannot be very far distant, would spurn us

from its door, and upbraid us as idle beggars."

"I pray thee not despond," replied Orinda; "we have many friends yet at Thebes, and thither, in time, we shall come: despair not, and then will we devise some means to obtain the hidden wealth we have so fortunately left at Cairo. Had we not forgotten that store, but had it with us when those merciless Arabs stripped us of our all, then indeed had fortune dealt hardly with us; secure now we are sure it is, as none but ourselves can ever discover its secret hidings; yet think, my father, what more than golden treasure that which we now seek: we will again forward, when the first light of day appears, and hope, at this caravansary, to learn the track of our dear, dear, injured Felix."

Selinus sighed deeply, and said—"I would not have thee, my beloved child, hug so fondly this hope, but separate it gently from thy heart, for sad foreboding



tells me we never shall behold the dear object of our love and search again."

"In mercy," answered the daughter, "say not so! but rather bid me separate the blood from my heart—then the heart, for want of blood, could not exist; and if thou wouldst drive this dear image from my mind, the mind shall action want, and die! No, no—rather command me to cherish this darling hope, and live."

The father embraced his child, and replied—"Sweet love, then flattering hope must be thy beacon on through this great peril."

Orinda answered—

"And what must that one be, that does not hope?  
The sailor, as he braves the troubled sea,  
Will hope again to see his long-left home:  
The mother, as she views her infant lay,  
Will take hope's pencil, and mark out a path,  
And, with pleasing anticipation, cry,  
Thus did thy sire—good—so, I hope, wilt thou.  
Shall I then dash Hope's sweet cup away,  
When I can see no bitter dregs in it?"

Selinus hung his head in silence; Orinda seated herself by him, and for a time

no conversation followed. Presently Orinda started, and seemed as intently listening. Her father gazed at her for a moment, and inquired what alarmed her? She replied—"Dear father, heard you not a noise, as some one stepping?"

"Poor thing!" he cried, "it was but thy fancy, or perhaps the prying curious wind passing through some crevice of the rock. Come, come, rest thee, rest thee, sweet one."

Orinda could not rest—she was becoming uneasy, and spake thus, as she stood before her reclining parent—"Alas! alas! it now grows dark apace; and as the light vanishes, I feel my fortitude forsake me, and cannot help betraying the weakness of my sex; but already am I ashamed—Yes, dearest Felix, I will brave every danger and hardship for thy beloved sake—and for thy preservation, my best of fathers, I will be bold!" She then drew her sword, for the robbers had suffered them to retain them, in case any wild animal should attack them, and continued

thus—"Lay thee down, my parent, and my sword shall protect thee from harm."

Selinus, at hearing this, forced an affectionate smile, and answered—"It is thy love and tender regard, my child, that make thee now so bold; but in case of danger, what could thy poor sword achieve?"

Here a voice near to them replied—"Very little, or less than that, if we may judge of the arm that wields it."

Orinda started at the strange voice, and after a short hesitation replied—"Hold, and stand there! approach no nearer, at thy peril! for I wear a trusty weapon, and thou mayest know it to thy cost."

Kilrest, for he it was that popped in his inquisitive nose just at this juncture, answered—"A weapon, saidst thou! tut, tut! a toothpick—quite a toothpick; believe it nothing else, nor use it for any other purpose—that is, if thou hast any food to perplex thy teeth withal."

Orinda, with a courage that surprised

her father, further continued—"Stand off then, or to thy *teeth* will I dare thee!"

His ragged majesty, with much *sang-froid*, replied—"Then my *tongue* shall guard my *teeth*, although mine ears are not astounded much by thy *voice*; it seems to flow from organs somewhat maidenish."

"But thou mayest find," she answered, "my voice bespeaks a heart as bold as thine."

"That is what I have yet to learn," said Kilrest; "the voice does not at all times bespeak the heart."

Selinus had now recovered his consternation at this unexpected rencounter, and addressed the stranger, saying—"If thou art a robber, thou wilt find us too poor for thee, and not worth thy trouble in detaining us."

"Ah ha! is it so indeed!" answered his queer majesty; "then the poorer luck is mine, old poverty: but what dost thou here then, in such *poor* plight?"

Selinus answered—"We are two sorry

travellers, benighted; and have lost our way, good friend."

"Well, with all my heart, good friend to thee again," replied the gipsy: "I am sorry too to hear that you are not rich; for chance to fall where thou wilt, there mayest thou lay—for the poor man can scarcely ever get a welcome. But what business brings thee hither?"

Orinda now again addressed herself to him, and said—"We hoped to have met some travellers hereabouts—hast thou had aught passing this way to-day?"

His majesty looked mighty cunning in her face, and twisting his royal mouth, answered—"Aught passing to-day! ay, more than was welcome; it knocked so loud in its passage, you might have heard it ten miles around."

"I understand thy meaning," said Orinda, "and dreadfully have we witnessed the power you thus speak of; but we would hear of that that is mortal, and to be seen."

"Well," replied the gipsy chief, some-

what short, “ we can both see and hear that which I speak of, and some too have wofully felt its force; for I understand two Arabs (but their loss is no matter) and four poor mules were thunderstruck, and so overcome that they answered not.”

Orinda caught at this, as a spark, if blown with care, likely to blaze into information so dear to her heart, and continued, with some emotion—“ I would give thee worlds to answer more of this.”

The king of perplexity, as well as the gipsies, after taking a survey around him, said—“ Then, my generous young seignior, thou wouldst give more than I should like to accept; for this one world is more than I can guide, although I sometimes dispatch a few, that I may have the less to govern.”

Orinda could scarcely restrain her impatience, and with much eagerness inquired if the black Arabs spoken of had a prisoner in their charge?

The tantalizing ragamuffin evidently enjoyed teasing the little bragging hero,

as he stepped to Orinda, and replied—"Why truly, my valiant thunderer, one there was, most surely, that made the devil of a charge, but he had his reckoning so quickly paid, that in the other world must sum up his accounts, and I, fearful that he might not understand the score, sent his partner after him to assist."

In a voice almost choked with apprehension, the agitated female exclaimed—"Thou wilt not thus boldly and fearlessly dare to say thou hast done murder?"

His majesty drew himself to his full height, and advancing a step or two nearer Orinda, and she, at the same time, receding, he crossed his hands behind him, and said—"Murder! humph! indeed I think it no murder to cut the throats of them that would cut yours: these Arabs mind no more of killing men than I should mind pilfering misers' gold."

Orinda's heart seemed ready to burst; she could not proceed; and as if ashamed of her tears, turned away.

Old Selinus too was much affected, but

resumed the questions thus—"My friend, this is no Arab that we are seeking, but one as pure and good as ever Egypt's sun shone on."

"Indeed," cried Kilrest; "blessed be the prophet's beard for so great a rarity! but if one that is both poor and needy can be both pure and good, perhaps I have had this paragon so rare. I will tell thee—about an hour since, a little further up the ravine here, and while the storm was still raging, I saw a young Turk, or Christian, I scarce know which to call him, most sorely beset at odds, and at buffets hard, with two black devils of Arabs; one he soon twisted into the other world, and his companion I was forced to send off in a hurry."

Orinda flew toward the gipsy, and clasping his hand between hers, exclaimed, in a transport—"Oh, tell me—tell me all! for this is him we seek; and in mercy, be he alive or dead, lead us to where he is!"

Kilrest was somehow or other rather astonished at her manner, and replied—



“Why dead men’s company was never good society, or I should not have thrown the bodies down the deep, to find a sepulchre in wild beasts’ maws.”

At hearing this the daughter would have sunk to the ground, had not the father supported her, who in much tribulation of mind exclaimed—“Oh, Heavens ! dead saidst thou ! oh, more living fiend art thou for killing him !”

Whether to shew his kingly breeding, or what we know not, but with such a scene immediately before his eyes, his roundabout majesty would not understand, but answered—“Thou meanest he looked so much like a fiend, that made me kill him : his colour spoke he was no devil’s bastard.”

Orinda was somewhat recovered, and when she heard this last speech, she started from her father’s arms, and with a tremulous voice cried—“Thou liest, monster, for he was as fair as truth !”

“Ay, ay,” quoth the king, “sayest thou that, my little scorpion captain ! then

truth is black, and most men are liars; and I, in great mistake, have killed the truth, while falsehood lives, and lives in colours false."

Selinus in turn addressed the ragged quibbler—"Then speak thou the truth—but say the Christian youth liveth, and I will bless thee for it."

At this his majesty strutted a bit, and in a consequential manner delivered the following—"Then bless me, Christian, if thou hast nought else to give, for I have not said him thou seekest was dead. But this in fair truth can I say, he assuredly would have been long enough ago, had I not saved him from the cut-throats' power."

When Orinda heard this, she in a submissive and supplicating manner said to the great chief—"In mercy, good Turk, keep us no longer in suspense: if mercy is an inmate of thy bosom, ease the anxiety of ours!"

"Ay!" replied Kilrest, "hast thou such a word as mercy in thy boasting vo-

cabulary, my trumpeting trounser? Well, well, since you thus supplicate, you shall in with me to my palace, and partake of my fare for thy courage; and this night thee and thy companion shall my night-companions be."

He then marshalled them over the rugged rock, and entered the ruins.

## CHAPTER V.

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What in creation is so weak as man?  
 What in creation is so strong as man?  
 For he by turns is both weak and strong:  
 To-day he dupes, to-morrow is the dupe;  
 And while he flatters only to betray,  
 Another whispers in his hungry ear  
 Some sweet delusive sounds, full of deceit,  
 And thus he's caught, while setting of a snare.

*Manuscript.*

THE part where his gipsyonic majesty discovered Selinus and his daughter being some distance from that where he found

Felix, they had most assuredly a different path to pursue; but every one may not know it might be as difficult for all that. But to settle that point at once, you must know, the distance was not only farther, but the way much more dangerous and dark, even had the time been daylight; nor did Kilrest deign to hold any converse to beguile the way over the ruins, but used such terms only as were necessary, merely such as—"Take care of that deep gap—stoop as you come through this low passage—trample over this heap of figures—get the right side of that upright senator—straddle across that fallen king—now tread on the head of this overthrown emperor, and then ascend the marble throne, where I now stand—that will do; but set your feet firmly, or perchance you may fall, for it is a slippery height—come away—now stay a little in this dark vault, and you will soon come to a change." He then left them a short time, but such was their tremour, the father and daughter ex-

changed not a word, but remained with their hands fast knitted, until they were in some part relieved by the seeing their nondescript host returning through a long and narrow passage, bearing a glimmering lamp, which he held above his head, the better to descry his guests. When he had approached near enough to perceive them, he called out in a hoarse voice, that awakened a hundred echoes—"Come on now, you are as safe as though you were in the confines of Beelzebub!"

And well might they picture those regions in their fancy, for every now and then a huge bat fluttered past, with a buzz that terrified their ears, while their eyes caught the glimpse of mouldering figures, blackened by corroding dust, or part a dirty and death-looking white, where the current of air caught their surface, while others were besprinkled with drops of damp, which made them look of a sparkling hue, as the glare of the lamp struck on them.

At length they were gratified, if any

gratification it could be called, by the sight of about twenty or thirty miserable-looking human beings, enveloped in a cloud of tobacco smoke, that struck so forcibly on the nasal organs, as almost at first to stop respiration, or make it extremely difficult. The place they had now entered was the hall we have before described, but had several entrances. So alarmed was Orinda at first, she could catch no one object in particular, but her optics wandered until she became dizzy, and all appeared chaos; from this however she was soon awakened, by the thundering sound of their conductor's voice, which filled every part of the spacious cavern, and aroused its inmates with these words — “How now, ye set of ragged rascals all! ye most rebellious scamping subjects! why do you not get up on your lazy legs, or down on your marrow-bones, ye poltroons you, when I your king am making my solemn entry? Look ye here, you dingy doddies! here are more visitors, but worth nothing, the worse luck ours; we have

but poorish bargains all this night. But stir your limbs, and bring some mats, to shew our consequence and state."

The attendants were immediately on the alert, and placed some wretched strawbands, wove into an odd sort of mat, before the Christian pair, and soon his mightiness the king, in no very courteous manner, compelled them to recline thereon. He then turned to a hollow cavity in the wall, and soon presented them with a bowl of mare's milk, strongly infused with spices, the sweetness of which both nourished and refreshed them.

Selinus, when he returned the vessel, said, with heartfelt gratitude—"For this relief accept my warmest thanks; in time will I further pay thee, and make thee rich."

"Very little doubt of that, as you at present think," answered the sagacious sovereign. "But to tell thee a bit of truth, I have a monstrous long list of debtors such as thou art, and if promises were only worth the booking, my sum-

ming up would be most puzzling; and as it would bankrupt most such debts to pay, I settle accounts with those that can, then am I so far paid and their debts transferred."

Orinda now ventured to speak, and next addressed Kilrest—"Fear not, good friend, but that thy kindness to us shall be generously repaid. But thou told us of another that thy friendship had this day saved; gratify our eyes but with the sight of him, it will benefit us more than aught of thy expence."

"Truly so I did, youngster; but so many strangers at once in my court bewilders my brain," quoth raggedhead; and turning to a different part of the cavern, where Felix was reclining, unmindful of aught that was passing, saluted him, saying—"Well, my noble devil-killer, how dost thou now? how dost find thy fighting self, hey? hast thou satisfied thyself with gipsies' fare, or did thy late black meal cloy thy white senses?"

Felix, raising himself a little, answer-



ed—"For what I have partaken I return thee my thanks, and now should like to rest my wearied limbs."

Kilrest answered—"Ay, but here are others as weary as thou art, yet fain would speak to thee, before they betake them to rest; so bestir thee awhile, and see if thou knowest these strangers."

He then led the wondering youth forward, and placed him before Selinus. No sooner had their eyes met, than they were in each other's arms: they spoke not—surprise and joy choked utterance. The father soon separated himself from the youth, and said—"Felix, look on this;" at the same time taking off the large hat from his daughter's head, and exposing her countenance.

Orinda had seen him approaching, and in some measure curbed her emotion; but when Felix recognised her, which was not at the first glance, they rushed into each other's arms, and as soon as articulation could flow over the burst of surprise, he

exclaimed—"My wife! my wife! kind Heaven, I thank thee!"

Orinda's tears gushed to her relief, and she could only answer—"Felix, oh, Felix, bless thee, my husband!"

The whole of the motley group had gathered around them by this time, and in different expressions testified their astonishment, though perhaps none more so than their chief—the pipe dropped from his hand and mouth—he leant forward, his body half bent, and his arms thrown upright; and after a time he thus broke forth—"What—what is all this? husband and wife! No, no, that must be wrong; it is wife first, I think, for it seems she wears the breeches. Well, well, I did think I had been a better judge of the sex too; but although a king, never mind. I am not the first that has been deceived by a woman."

The tender scene however moved this strange being's bosom, and he commanded his gaping courtiers to withdraw to some

distance, and he himself fell backwards several paces.

Selinus stood absorbed in thought; his head hung, and frequent and heavy sighs broke forth from his overcharged breast.

Felix gazed in raptures as he entwined his beloved in his arms, and seemed there to fix his every hope and wish—his very soul seemed wrapt there.

Orinda recovered, and as her eyes rapidly ran over his features and form, she cried in ecstasy—"Oh, happy, happy moment this! here end all my cares." Then turning suddenly on her father, and perceiving his pensive mood, stretched her hand, and taking his, continued—"Dearest father, come and look on us, and embrace us—you do not seem to partake of our bliss."

The overwhelmed parent in silence for a time surveyed the happiness of his children; but, alas! such weighty thoughts bore upon his mind, as to prevent a fair participation.—"Oh, my beloved," he exclaimed, "I fear a heavy cloud is suspend-

ed over thy present happiness, that damps my joy and darkens our prospects; for if I should live to see thee wandering in want, when we of late had such sufficient means to command the comforts of life and make it pass as a holiday—oh, that distressing thought maddens me !”

Felix fixed his eyes on Orinda in astonishment, and asked what strange meaning her father hinted at ?

The fair wife replied—“ When the news of thy condemnation and cruel sentence first reached us, we resolved no longer to remain in fatal Cairo, but to trace thy course, and follow thee to the world’s furthest verge, and share thy fate. Thy route we surmised ; but in our hurry to leave the polluted city, we left a casket of precious jewels, yet in such a secret hiding-place that none can ever discover it, save Selinus or myself. Yet what kind Providence rules over us, and how wisely disposed that we had them not with us ! for only one day’s march from this a band of cruel Arab robbers deprived us of our

mules and luggage; and much hidden treasure was concealed in the pads of the beasts."

The gipsy king's ears were open, and eagerly swallowed their conversation, although his manner bespoke he heeded them not. But when Orinda mentioned the Arabs, and the great prize that they unknowingly possessed, he could hold no longer—the success of his enemies made him ready to burst, and he vociferated—“Oh, I wish the devil had all Arabs! not a single prize can we poor honest pilferers pick up for these fell murderers.—But tell me, seignior,” he continued, addressing himself to Orinda—“No, no, not seignior, I mean my good lady-breeches, tell me what sort of pads thy good mules wore; I know thy robbers well—the rascals have hovered about these parts for these several days past. I know the mart well too for their plunder; and it will be but a fair return in thee to describe accurately thy mules and their trappings, that I, by giving a fair market price for them, may secure a

bargain, and thou recover a portion of thy property for thy pains."

Selinus and Orinda in an instant complied with this request, and most minutely described every particular relating to their lost property.

His majesty then called two of his confidants to him, and told them of the discovery, and bade them hasten to the caravansary by break of day, and if the mules, &c. were not disposed of, to purchase them at any rate.

It seems this caravansary we have heard so much about was situated about two miles from the ruins, the master of which was hail fellow and well met with either Turk, Jew, Arab, devil, or any body else that he could get any thing by—honest or not, was all the same to the host of the caravansary—all was alike to him, and all at times alike plundered by him, but always in the way of trade. There however certainly existed between him and Kilrest a particular friendship; and whenever the latter wanted mules, camels, or whatever,

for an expedition, he had only to apply to the caravansary, and was there accommodated; and this personage was considered the only one that knew of the gipsies' retreat, and who for that fraternity received all communications.

Many and contrary ideas flashed across the mind of the Christian father—Kilrest seemed a curious composition of mortality; but the thought of regaining a part of their treasures, even if it should be but sufficient to enable them to reach Thebes, buoyed his expectations and made him more tranquil.

The gipsy chief had been satisfied as to a part of what he had heard in the Christian's conversation; but another and more important matter remained unexplained—yet how could he broach the subject? He could certainly entertain his guests for the remaining part of the night with the success of his adventures in recovering property by dint of his art and mystery, which was in fact only cunning and artifice. He began by inquiring the latest

news at Cairo, and the principal doings now going on there, and continued with saying, it was now some time since he had visited the city, but he must again shortly go, and on most particular and important business—in f.ct, he said significantly, it was rather of a mysterious nature, for not a part of that vast town existed but that he was perfectly acquainted with, and could find by night or day, by light or by dark.

All this however would not do, and made no passage to the path he wished to tread. Felix and Orinda were wholly taken up with each other; and Selinus could not be spurred on in his majesty's way into communication.

At length he became more explicit, and with much twisting and turning, by way of preface, he said—"Come, come, Christian friends, the night is wearing fast, and our poor accommodation I fear will but ill accord with what you have so precipitately left. But never mind, good fare, with a hearty and honest welcome,



must make up other deficiencies ; and be assured, to-morrow morning you shall again be in possession of a sufficiency to carry you well on your road, and if our aim in one point should miscarry, no doubt another may be hit upon to answer the purpose ; for often has it been my lot to meet merchants, who after having been plundered by these rascally freebooters and infernal Arabs, that have blessed the lucky star that has thrown them in the way of Kilrest, king of the ravine gipsies ; for such, seigniors, is my title.—So come, some of you,” speaking to his fellows, “ bring out a flask of wine, to make the Christian hearts glad, while we poor Mahometans will bewilder our senses with drugs and smoke.”

The beverage was instantly brought, and again the visitors partook of an invigorating draught ; nor did his majesty forget his royal self, but rather in a more private way. Replenishing his pipe, he again joined his guests, and addressing himself to Orinda, said—“ Fair lady, did

I not hear you grieving about treasures you left in Cairo hidden? Name but the place, even from the topmost point of the great mosque, to the deepest cells within the walls, I will answer with my life to restore them safely to your custody, if you will pay me well for my hazard and trouble."

Selinus answered—"It is impossible: although the treasures we have left behind will now be for ever lost, yet would their value purchase half Cairo, and were once a part of the state jewels, and their secrecy is so secure, no one save my daughter and myself could ever discover them."

Kilrest had heard this, and his soul seemed on fire, as he exclaimed—"Oh, let them no longer be a trouble to you! name but the spot where they are hidden, my mystic art shall so work, that in a few hours they shall bless your sight again, or I will for ever give over conjuring."

The Christian answered—"I tell thee, friend, it is impossible; hadst thou the art to out-cunning cunning, thou couldst never

come to their hiding; unless led by me or my child."

Kilrest caught him up, and replied—"Wilt thou then with me to Cairo? I know thy story<sup>t</sup> in part, for very little transpires in that city but what I am acquainted withal; and in ten hours from this could I let thy friend there know where thou art now. Thou hast seen such things as pigeons fly in Egypt, I dare say, my friend." He now fixed his eyes for a moment full in the face of Selinus, and winked most significantly. He then continued—"I will answer for thy safety, and I will give thee such counterfeit and guise, that should even puzzle the devil to discover thee."

"I pray thee, good gipsy," answered Selinus, "speak to me no more on the subject; my strength is gone, and I am sick at heart, even to death; but that I cling so close to earth for certain reasons, else could I die at once and be at rest."

Orinda turned on her parent, and throwing her arms about his neck, said—"Dear,

dearest father, talk not now of death, or want to crush our happiness. 'I will to Cairo with this man; none in the city can possibly know me in this disguise. I have no fear, indeed I have not, if my father blesses me in my undertaking;" and then addressing her husband, she continued—"And thee, my beloved, for our tender parent's sake, will not say nay?"

Felix's manner bespoke his embarrassment, and he knew not how to reply; but at length said—"For our dear parent's sake, my beloved, I would sacrifice every earthly happiness; but what would wealth be to him, or me without thee? thou art our gold, our jewel, meat, drink, our every thing for comfort!"

Kilrest now began to perceive he was likely to gain his point, by Orinda turning volunteer: he therefore twisted the sombre cast of the conversation thus—"All very pretty that indeed! but it cannot last for ever: the kisses from her lips you may call your meat; her breath you sip, and that may call your drink, and

your love for a time—your every thing; but all these you will find scurvy fare to wander through life's long and dreary way; or something else may come that will want more. I should never have become to manhood, had I had no other nourishment than *kisses*."

Selinus could scarcely forbear a smile at the whimsicality of his host, and answered—"Thou art a knave truly with thy tongue, whatever thou art in thy doings; yet should I not mind to trust thee in this task; but for my daughter's going with thee, there I have not the voice to say—go."

Orinda answered her father with much quickness—"Oh, my parent! do not say I *shall* go, if it would grieve thee—nor do not say I *shall not* go. Speak no further on it; my duty commands me—it is to make thy future life happy. I have ever at my heart that sacred kindred feeling that keeps me still the daughter, although I am a wife."

Selinus caught her in his arms, and

pressed her to his bosom, then said, with a sigh—"Dear love, thou art thine husband's now, and my child only; I cannot dispose, but I will ever pray."

The gipsy saw his aim could never be settled, if he suffered this *pro* and *con* to continue between the father and daughter, the husband and wife; he therefore cut it short in this manner of speech.—"Come, come, this business shall be settled in a crack; for I will hold all prerogative here. You shall all three journey with me on the way as far as safety will permit you to go, and then leave the rest to Orinda and my better judgment."

Selinus remained silent, but frequently cast a look at Felix, as waiting for his assent; for although he was so fond a parent, still he was a man of the world: the hidden jewels were now his only earthly riches—his mind hung most heavily toward their restoration.

The prince read the expression of his eye, and determined, whatever pang it might cost his bosom, to consent to his

wife's departure; and taking her hand, and one of Kilrest's at the same time, said —“ Go, go, my beloved, for our dear parent's sake.—And thou, Kilrest, as thou hopest for mercy hereafter, bring *this* treasure safe back—for her worth is more than all the precious gems that earth or ocean could produce, and all the powers of earth will blame *me* if I lose it, that I should trust such worth out of mine own care; and for the jewels, if thou bringest them safe too, thou shalt have of them what thy utmost wishes would.”

His ragged majesty jumped for joy at this new and likely to be lucrative undertaking, and replied—“ As I speed in this so shall you pay me; fear not my honesty, and I will not doubt thy generosity.—And you, good father, in my absence, shalt be regent here, and that is no little honour, I assure you; for although I am but king of gipsies here, I would not change to be emperor *below*, where all the villainous Arabs descend to. I told you I had heard of the caliph's son turning

apostate, and marrying a Christian merchant's daughter, and so fell under the displeasure of his sire, but I have never heard the merchant's name; now you being the party I believe, good old seignior, please to give me thy name, that I may know what to call my new master?"

The Christian answered—"I am not ashamed of my name, good fellow, for never have I committed an act to raise the blush of ignominy on my countenance, or slur the character of Selinus."

Kilrest, when he heard this name, started, as though he had been surprised by a deadly serpent, whose pestiferous breath poisoneth the surrounding air; his colour became a deathlike hue, the rheum started from his eyes, and he gulped for breath—the hand of death seemed to be upon him. A general consternation ran throughout the assemblage—several attempted to assist him, but in a frenzy he put them aside, and kept his eyes frightfully fixed on Selinus.

The terrified Christian stood aghast—



the cavern was as silent as the tomb—and thus for a short time it remained; looks only ~~were~~ exchanged, and wonder filled every breast. At length the merchant, recovering from his first shock of surprise, advanced toward the fixed Kilrest, but as he saw the Christian approaching, he cried, in a frantic voice—“Stand ~~on~~, stand off, Selinus!—Oh, holy prophet!” when he had uttered this, he could no longer support himself, but fell prostrate on the floor. Each looked ~~in~~ his fellow’s face, as if to find an explanation there. The fallen gipsy deeply and horridly inwardly groaned; his followers poured a strong potion down his throat, which assisted nature, and again he respired freely: by degrees he recovered his breath, and his legs also; his speech returned, and stretching forth his hand toward the Christian, he faintly said—“Come hither, Selinus; thou art now in my power—but let not that alarm thee; for these many, many years I have avoided coming where it was likely to meet thee for fear; and much hath it

been against my interest to keep away from the market-places, yet still did I dread to meet Selinus; and often have I entered the city with the determination to come to thy face; but the nearer I came to my point, the more would my heart recoil."

Selinus was now more than ever astonished, and replied—"For the sake of Heaven, why livest thou in fear of me? for, in my remembrance, I never beheld thee until this night."

The gipsy answered—"Oh yes—oh yes thou hast, Selinus! twenty years hath so altered thee and me, that had not thy name have met mine ears, mine eyes would have kept thee a stranger."

The merchant answered—"Nor can my eyes convey any knowledge to my tongue, to give thee a name familiar, nor any sense recognise thee as one I have ever before seen."

"Oh, Selinus! poor old man!" sighed Kilrest: "but I will make thee recognise

me, and thou shalt tremble—Didst thou ever hear the name of *Banca*?”

Selinus paused a little, and replied—  
“Indeed I have, and now thou dost remind me, the name of Banca seems used to my tongue and ear.”

“Oh, it must—it must!” answered the gipsy; “and thy tongue too must be familiar in curses on that name.”

“By Heavens, you wrong me,” said the Christian, “or labour under some strange delusion! for nothing have I to charge myself withal, or any one else, that I should curse that name.”

Kilrest drew nearer the merchant, and said—“Dost thou remember, between twenty and thirty years ago, a chubby wanton lad, that was thy free servant, when a cruel circumstance took place among thy slaves upon the quays of Bulac? There was at the time an old woman, who picked up a scanty maintenance by her labour, or perhaps I should say rather by her wits, for she used to entertain the idle and the ignorant with tales and sto-

ries, some famed in our country, and others hatched by her fertile brain, to answer the purpose of the moment: she was a little old creature, and somewhat deformed, and she was called Zesta—dost thou recollect such a one, Selinus:”

The merchant paused for a time, and then said—“The space is so long since, and the circumstance such an idle one, I cannot perfectly recollect; yet somewhat too of such a one I have a faint idea.”

Kilrest reddened—his frame became agitated, and he vociferated—“An idle circumstance! a faint idea of such a one, saidst thou!—Oh, Selinus! didst thou not kill her, murder her, wickedly deprive her of life, when her only crime was tipping thy hot and rebellious stores from the casks, and enjoying luxuries given her by those she entertained? until, with thy Christian sport, and with strong drink and wine, her brain would madden, then wouldst thou fool with her follies and misfortunes. Yes, Christian, thou wert one

of them that mocked her frailties: and didst thou not one morning, out of direct wantonness and wilful mischief, plunge her headlong into a cask of strong spirits, and she died? yes, Selinus, she died, and left me an orphan: I was then a free servant of thine; and no sooner had the fatal news reached mine ears, that thou hadst killed my mother, than I vowed revenge, and flew from thy service, and from Cairo: I am that Banca! now canst thou look on <sup>me</sup> me, Christian?"

"I know thee not as Banca, nor can I trace in thee the features of the boy thou speakest of," said Selinus; "and for my participation in the murder of the wretched maniac Zesta, I disown it; and to further prove my innocence and abhorrence of the crime, no sooner had it come to my knowledge, than I delivered the slaves that did do the deed to the justice of the caliph's court: now, Turk, canst thou look me in the face after so foul an imputation?"

The gipsy replied—"Thus much before have I heard; but it was reported thy

gold swayed the balance of justice, and exculpated thee."

The merchant answered—"There thou dost me further wrong, as it was clearly proved I had not stirred from mine house that fatal morning: yet was it, in some part, a blessed morning, for it was the day Orinda first saw the light."

"Ay, ay, it was! it was!" replied the gipsy, in a hurried manner; "and in two days after I joined a band of gipsies, and have ever since inhabited these ruins. Orinda had a twin brother—am I right, Christian?"

Selinus drooped, and answered—"Alas! alas! she had—a healthy, blooming child; for two years he fed our hopes, and cherished our loves; but at the expiration of that time, he was suddenly missing, and never more could we learn of him: our loss deprived his distressed mother of her reason, and she shortly died a raving lunatic."

Kilrest was dreadfully agitated, and with a tremulous voice cried—"Oh, holy

prophet ! and for two years I suffered all the tortures of cherished revenge ; nothing would I let satisfy my rankled bosom as to thy innocence of my mother's blood ; often I visited the city, in various disguises, after once attempting thy life, as thou wert returning from the quays—dost thou remember that occurrence ?”

Selinus answered in the affirmative, and said he never could suspect who the assassin was.

“ I was that assassin,” continued Kilrest, “ but fortunately I missed my aim, and saved thy blood from resting on my head. Still revenge, revenge haunted me—revenge slept with me, walked with me, and revenge was my very shadow. I have said various were the times and disguises I assumed, to gain an opportunity to glut my passion—one morning I saw thy two cherubs sporting on thy threshold—I darted on the boy, and tore him away.”

At this recital Orinda fainted, and her parent became overwhelmed with emotion.

## CHAPTER VIII.



Now bent with sickness, old and poor,  
Beside his unfrequented door,  
As leaning on his staff he stood,  
In pensive melancholy mood,  
Severe remembrance cross'd his mind,  
Of blighted hopes, and friends unkind.

CHARLOTTE C. RICHARDSON'S *Ludolph*.

READER, if I should attempt to describe the emotions of the friends left behind, I perforce must falter; therefore imagine, if thou canst, what they must have been; what the tender and affectionate father, trusting his child, and that child a beautiful female, in all the bloom of life, to the care of a man like Kilrest—a man fraught with every cunning and art that should disgrace the human being—a man whose very existence had hung for years on his chicanery and petty fraud—a man shunned by civil society, and dreaded by those



worse than himself—a man little better than a murderer. Yes, Selinus did all this, and for what? his interest—his interest here and hereafter; for it is as much the duty of a parent to endeavour for the happiness of his offspring, be their state mature or infant, and they have not by their conduct forfeited the tender claim, as it is the right and divine command for the child to watch over and guard the parent from want, and to administer to all their wishes, and promote their comfort. The merchant consented to his paternal pangs, that his child might hereafter, and when he no longer would witness nor joy nor sorrow, set the world at defiance, and say—“I am mine own friend.” But how shall we hold the mirror, and say—this is Felix, a man newly married, married to virtue and chastity, selected from all the glittering world as the most approved, best, but the poorest, and moreover an outcast, yet a wronged and an injured man, taken, fostered, sheltered, fed, and loved; yet with all these obligations hanging over his

head, he could consent to part with his earthly angel, and give her to the custody of an earthly devil. Was this interest? was it love? was it duty? It was all these. To Scelinus he owed his life: the sacrifice was to Scelinus's wish; it was also the wish and desire of her he loved, in duty to her parent. Let them that can, better account for these doings, or soften it down, and conclude that it was human frailty.

But what can we say for Orinda? Say! say she was a dutiful daughter, an affectionate wife, and a *woman*. Would to Heaven all that bear the sex could be so spoken of! So much for this digression; it has tickled my whim of the moment, and I hope for forgiveness. Let us now return to our adventures.

Such was the extreme anxiety evinced for those departed, that no one shewed a disposition to leave the spot where they stood. The elements were watched, and shewed a favourable tendency. Calm and tranquil passed the remainder of the night:

the morning broke in unison: the day seemed to have fallen in love with the night; the faint moon blushed as the sun, like an ardent lover, pushed his course, and struck his rays amain.

Oscar, to draw his father and Felix from reminiscence so affecting, began a conversation by pointing out the different objects in view, and to particularize beauties in the surrounding country; and in the doing of which he was assisted by the aged gipsy we spoke of, and who pleaded to the Christians in behalf of Kilrest, when he prostrated himself before them, after restoring the wronged Oscar to his parent. This proved to be a man far superior to most of his tribe, and tolerably well informed. He shewed the various routes in the country, and traced out the many roads; as each place of note came under observation, he added some adventure, or related an anecdote connected to it, beguiling the time, and diverting their attention.

At a vast distance over the country,

and in the direction of the Nile, he pointed out a cluster of lofty spires, whose towering crescents glittered in the sun, but scarce discernible with the naked eye. This he informed them was one of the summer palaces of the caliph Elmuton, and situated on the banks of the river, where the viceroy occasionally retired with his chief ladies of the harem during the sultry season of the year, and made the excursion with much pomp and ceremony by water from Cairo. The gipsy continued, saying it was most likely Kilrest and Orinda would make their first halt during the heat of the day near that spot; and what rendered this place remarkable was, it was built by the late caliph Osmar, who was raised to the dignity by an insurrection of the Mamelukes, but afterwards a counter commotion hurled him from his throne, and which had ever since been filled by Elmuton, sanctioned by the grand sultan of Constantinople. The trials and vicissitudes of Osmar were manifold, and his oppressors cruel; nor

was his end ever properly ascertained: the general rumour was, he was taken by surprise at this summer palace, and there, with many of his partisans, secretly and inhumanly dispatched. But this however was never satisfactorily proved; nor had the Mamelukes since long together remained quiet. Elmuton had now reigned upwards of twenty years, and longer than any of his predecessors had done for the last century and a half.

Poor Felix heard all this, and hard were his struggles; for the palace pointed out by the gipsy was well known to him, and where the early part of his life was spent, in company with his late brother Hamman, and where Sebastian first commenced his career, by being a sort of tutor to the young princes in their exercises; from which situation he was raised in power, and Elmuton's confidence, by his artful address and sycophant manners to his superiors. Nor was it ever properly proved what country he originally came from, but universally imagined his birthplace

was Spain, and that he was a Christian; but fortune seemed to beckon him from every point, and circumstances tending to his advantage, that induced him to apostatize his faith and embrace the creed of Mahomet. This doing gained him the esteem of the priests, and many in authority, which, with his own assiduity and daring aspiring spirit, led him to an ascendancy over the soldiery, and usurp a superiority of bearing in weighty matters. How completely he governed the caliph has already appeared; but to what his ambition may lead him, we have yet to learn.

Selinus perfectly remembered the civil broils which the old gipsy alluded to, for he had been resident in Egypt the last forty years, the greater part of which as a merchant; and with his countrymen and friends in Spain had turned his transactions to such good account, that he was considered the richest Christian merchant on the banks of the Nile; and often would

the state finances at Cairo, but for his aid, been reduced to such extremity of want as most likely to have overturned the common weal. The late dethroned caliph, Osmar, at the time he was deposed, was much indebted to the Christian money-lenders; but when his day had passed, even the naming of such a circumstance would have been dangerous in a country like this; it was therefore quietly entered in the merchant's account book "loss;" and a heavy balance sheet it proved; but no alternative was there—"profit" rendered a "misnomer," and produce "minus."

The time passed thus for an hour or two, when the sun became too powerful to stand thus exposed. Oscar proposed a descent, and the party once more entered the dreary cavern.

When they had partaken of refreshments, and the day partly worn away, the Christians expressed a wish to enjoy the open air; but as they were departing for that purpose, a gipsy entered with a small billet.

Oscar flew in a transport of pleasure to the fellow, and snatching the paper from his hand, exclaimed—"A pigeon! a pigeon!" and so it proved; for you must know his cunning majesty of the ravine had provided a pair or two of these feathered couriers, that he might communicate his progress to the ruins; and as the delighted youth unfolded the scroll, the name of Felix first caught his sight. He in raptures handed the precious modicum to the prince, who read aloud, as intelligibly as his emotions would allow:—"Felix, my beloved, we are safe—above half way to Cairo; embrace my father!"

This petit morsel was hailed with inexpressible delight by all parties; and Oscar reported that another perhaps might arrive on the morrow; but as the city was in so disturbed a state, and such little communicative tatlers, unless they were dispatched by the high authorities, would most likely never reach their destination, he begged of them, in the most affec-



tionate terms, not to be alarmed in case of defalcation. •

We have, I believe, already said somewhere, this manner of conveying communication is common in this country, where so many obstacles occur to prevent a more certain method of exchanging intelligence; and indeed the laws in this part of the world are most rigidly adhered to, as to the preservation and security of these winged carriers. It would in fact be impossible in some seasons of this wonderful empire to gain any knowledge of the other without the assistance of the carrier pigeon, beside the facility with which communication is conveyed; and we are told of old these little downy Mercuries were not only held in great estimation, but venerated and worshipped; and I think they are at all times to be adored, in preference to leeks and onions, which the ancient Egyptians used to down on their marrowbones to and worship, which is undoubtedly proved by their sculpture

and other antiquities, as well as tradition to aver it.

With hearts somewhat lighter for this report our party sallied forth to inhale the refreshing air of evening. As they perambulated at the back of the ruins, among rude rocks and passages almost inaccessible, the further the Christian father penetrated into the mind, and delved the disposition of his new-found son, the more he became charmed and astonished at his erudition and knowledge, and several times expressed his surprise and satisfaction.

Oscar was as much delighted at the converse of his friends; for seldom would Kilrest allow him to mix with the world for information, except such as he found in the society of the two dervises we have before named, and whom he frequently spoke of in his discourse with a sort of veneration.

Selinus inquired how far these two recluses lived from the passage, when Oscar answered it was on the brink of the desert, and about two miles distant, if they fol-

lowed the path they were now treading, and about one mile from the caravansary; but to those unacquainted with the road, hard and difficult to be discovered.

Selinus inquired of his son if these strange men had so far retired from the world as not to be spoken with by strangers?

Oscar replied, their age and sound understanding made them sometimes much sought after, in the season when the caravans were passing, and guides were always to be found at the caravansary ready to direct the curious to their dwelling; and indeed it is likely they never would have become known to the world as they now were of late, had it not been for those people who made a living, and are always to be found where travellers were in the habit of stopping, to cry up the wonders of their neighbourhood, and make profit by their pains, but continued in their privacy, and not had their retirement so broken in upon as had been the case during the last two or three seasons. Oscar

said they had resolved to remove to some other habitation, where they might unmolested indulge in their solitude; for it was now become impossible, with all their caution, to prevent the intrusion of strangers, whom they evidently much wished to avoid.

Selinus expressed his desire to see them, not from idle curiosity, but that he might by his thanks in some measure repay them for their care and trouble in making him, Oscar, informed as he was; and none but those endowed with superior capabilities and knowledge were able.

The son answered his parent that he was sure at all times to have a welcome access to them; and he also conceived it a duty he owed to his instructors, as well as his father, that he should promote such a meeting; and now that the evening was set in, they might be sure to find them at their abode, and proposed the present opportunity as the most fit.

The party then quickened their pace, among scattered trees and rocks, onwards

to the residence of the Recluses of the Yellow Desert; for this appellation had been given them for some time past.

After our party had beaten the craggy path for a time, they descended a little dell, the extreme opening of which gave a view of the desert, about half a mile distant, and without the least supposing any human habitation was near. Oscar pointed out a cluster of wild fig trees—this he informed them was the entrance to their retreat; and at the same time begged them to remain some paces back, the while he prepared the occupants for visitors, or learned if they would allow them to disturb the sanctuary.

In this however they were prevented, for they had gained but a few steps ere they perceived an aged man squatting on a low stone, intently perusing the contents of a passage in the Koran. He caught sight of them before they could recede, and rising from his position, called to the youth, saying—"Bradine, my good boy, come hither."

The young man approached with every mark of respect and reverence, when the aged one affectionately embraced him : after which he raised his hand upon his forehead, as if to assist his vision, and said —“ Thou hast visitors with thee, Bradine ; bid them come and rest themselves, and I will fetch some new milk to refresh them ; my poor old companion, Kesto, has just returned with some from the caravansary, and is now gone to rest himself after the fatigue.”

Oscar replied—“ The prophet protect thee, good father Ishmaud ! we are not in need of thy refreshment, as we have but so lately left the cavern.” He then, turning to Selinus and Felix, presented them to Ishmaud, saying—“ Father, these two seigniors are travellers whom Kilrest met in distress, and are biding at the cavern some short time to recover themselves before they depart. Pardon, good father, the intrusion, but they would fain have a few words with thee.”

“ The prophet bless thee, and bless them

also!" answered the old man: "let them come near, me."

He then drew his form as erect as his infirmities and years would permit, and gave the usual salutation of the Mussulmen in a dignified way, considering his age. His hoary beard, silvered with the frost of time, hung a patriarchal length to his middle. In his frame there was still remaining the wreck of a man whose figure must once have been commanding and majestic; his voice was tremulous in a small degree, yet his sounds, at times, full of power and energy; his optics were embossed with the rheum of age, but still the latent spark of penetration lingered there; his general behaviour bespoke him a man well versed with the world; and his demeanour stamped him well used to society.

The Christians were instantly filled with a sort of awe, as approaching a mortal far, far above the level of mankind; and as they acknowledged and returned his obei-

sance, an indescribable embarrassment came over them.

With much courtesy he requested them to be seated, and turning to Selinus said —“Thou art a Christian?”

The merchant answered in the affirmative; when Ishmaud, as wishing to broach conversation, continued —“From what part last comest thou?”

Selinus answered—“From Grand Cairo;” at hearing which the recluse betrayed some emotion, and heaved a heavy sigh.

The party for a space remained silent, when it was interrupted by Ishmaud shaking his head, and saying—“Poor devoted city! it has of late been much convulsed, and I fear it will not long remain tranquil: the demon of discord hath set his foot there, and reared his horrid front, and wo, I fear, will betide it. How long since thou left?”

“Within these few days,” replied the Christian; “and I doubt not for ever.”

Ishmaud answered this smartly, saying —“Best, best so perhaps. But I suppose



thy occupation was trade? therefore commotion might have turned to thy profit, for it is the profit of many for a time."

Selinus now in turn sighed, and scarcely audible, answered—"Domestic commotion has been my ruin." When the aged man, with much penetration and quickness, replied—"What, hath the foot of power trod over thy threshold? Poor man! poor man! if so it is, thou art to be pitied!"

The merchant, after hesitating within himself, at last, by way of prelude, summoned resolution to tell in part his story, but gave no Christian names; nor did he touch where his daughter now was, or that Oscar was his son; but whenever he mentioned the name of Elmuton, he could plainly perceive it moved the hermit, and caused much tribulation in him.

Conversation followed, and begat a sort of confidence. When the merchant related the manner in which Kilrest found him, and his conduct on the occasion, it drew from the recluse this observation—

“ That gipsy,” he said, “ is a strange mixture of mortal clay. I have known him these five years, which time I have inhabited this lone and poor retreat with one only companion, save the time Bradine has been intrusted to my care by the gipsy chief, when he has been absent from his curious gang ; yet in this space, and frequent opportunities, can I not discover the material of the man. He is cunning, nay subtle ; yet to me often been a friend in my necessity. Bradine, he has told me, he loves sincerely, which I believe ; he has also informed me he is not his son ; and he is altogether such a compound of secrecy and volubility, that I could never hold him long enough in one vein to fathom his foundation.”

“ No, good father,” said Selinus, “ Bradine, as you call him, is not the gipsy’s son—he is my son.”

Ishmaud was struck with surprise : he looked first on the Christian, and then on Oscar, and shaking his head, pathetically said—“ Do not mock me, Christian. I

am an old man, it is true: my misfortunes have forced me to seek this poor abode, and the curiosity of the world doth haunt me here, and men look upon me as they would upon some rare animal; the ignorant guides make a profit by shewing me; and my grey beard is daily insulted by my kind, who should reverence it. Don't thee, pray don't, Christian, do not mock my failings because I have loved this poor boy."

As he finished he cast his tear-fraught eyes upwards, and turned away.

Oscar fell on his knees before him, and taking his hand, bedewed it with the precious balm of affection, that found vent from his streaming eyes.

Selinus was so affected at the scene, his utterance was suspended, and Felix dumb with emotion, when Oscar had somewhat recovered, but with speech interrupted by his sobs, articulated—"Indeed, indeed, good Ishmaud, he is my father, and when thou shalt further know him, will acknowledge him a good man. Kilrest ever loved

me, I do believe; thou hast been ever kind and affectionate to me; but Selinus is indeed my father."

The old reclusè suddenly turned, and for a moment fixed his eyes on the merchant; then, as if he would hide a transient surprise that had crossed him, made no reply, but raised Oscar and embraced him; and without betraying any particular sort of feeling, chased the suspended tear from his lids, and still holding the hand of the youth, said—"What name was that thou uttered, good boy—was it Selinus?"

The merchant caught the question, and as to wipe off the stigma and imputation of Ishmaud, replied—"Yes, Selinus, the late Christian merchant of Cairo; and although now overwhelmed with distress, and a heavier cloud still suspended over me, threatening to deluge me in sorrow, let whatever happen that may, I will never be ashamed to avow my name—I never have, reverend father."

The aged Mussulman took the hand of

the Christian, and in a tone that spoke his broken spirit, answered—"Forgive me, Christian, my wrongs have made me consider all men alike."

Selinus then went through the whole narrative of Kilrest, from the first birth of his revenge to the period of the gipsy delivering Oscar to his paternal embrace in the cavern; and when he had finished, Ishmaud exclaimed—"Kilrest is an ignorant man; he had no refined sources to check his unruly passions, and the strongest without a curb became the ruler. But what canst thou say of Elmuton, good merchant? he has every sense, refined by knowledge, experience, and learning; yet thou sayest he has turned his offspring adrift on the world—his only son—made himself fatherless by his own act. I know not which is the greatest wretch, he who robs the father of his child, or the father that casts his offspring on the wide and pitiless world unprotected."

The last sentence went to the core of the merchant's heart; he knew not how

to answer: the forlorn, the cast-off son of Elmuton had found a friend; and that friend was himself; yet in a manner had he cast off his own child, or allowed her to throw herself upon a dreadful venture.

The recluse congratulated Oscar on his new acquirement of happiness, and asked where his sister then was, whom Selinus said was with him when the gipsy chief discovered them, and continued his question with inquiring the reason why he had not seen the king of the ravine these two days past, for when last he saw him, he had not named he should be absent, as his usual custom was.

These were all alike perplexing questions to answer: the son had particularly noticed the father's caution in not naming Orinda in the narrative he gave of Felix, nor could Ishmaud in anywise understand the young stranger before him was the son of Elmuton, and husband to his sister; therefore the trio was much embarrassed how to make a reply, until Felix, who had remained silent since the commence-

ment of the interview, with a modest and well-told tale delivered the whole transaction, and disclosed to the recluse who he was.

The hermit stood for a time motionless and dumb, when clasping his hands, and lifting them toward heaven, exclaimed—“What an age of wonderful events hath this brief hour exposed!” and as if ruminating on what he had lately heard, remained a considerable space silent, occasionally giving each of his visitors a glance, as he would read their thoughts. They were all sorrowful; the poor old man felt for them, and in a conciliatory tone thus spoke—“What I have learned of Kilrest, be not afraid of his care: on his own account I doubt not his cunning and subtlety will in the event succeed.” After a short pause he suddenly said—“Where dost thou intend to reside in future? for the malice of Elmuton will follow thee.—And thou, poor, unfortunate, and misguided youth!” he continued, addressing himself to Felix, “this vast empire will not afford thee shelter for thy offence—renouncing

the creed of the holy prophet will raise a foe against thee in every corner where its blessed influence prevails, and thine own bosom must at times be restless; I do not mean to chide thee—mine own troubles weigh heavily on me, and my rebukes shall not add to thine.”

Selinus informed the recluse it was their intention to remove, as soon as his daughter should return, and make the most possible speed to Thebes, and from thence embark to the land of his nativity, Spain.

“Best, much best were that,” replied Ishmaud; “and may the Holy One have ye in his care!” Then taking the hand of Oscar, recommenced speaking—“My poor boy, thou art too in a manner an apostate, but an involuntary one, if thou hast any faith in particular to apostatize; but alas! in that great essential thou art wofully ignorant; for when first I knew thee, thou didst scarcely know thou hadst a Creator; for among thy illiterate and worldly-thoughted companions, the most



momentous considerations are shockingly neglected, or wholly disregarded; therefore I would have thee embrace and cleave to thy father's faith, as it was promised for thee in thy infancy thou shouldst do; and when thou shalt mix with the busy world, and resort with reasonable men, think sometimes of the precepts instilled into thy green and inexperienced mind by poor old Ishmaud, the miserable and heart-broken recluse: and when thou shalt meet with the laughing, gay, and vigorous man, enjoying all the comfort, and partaking of the bliss of the world, drinking copiously of the cup of pleasure, and passing good with mankind, think of Ishmaud, and say such a one was poor old Ishmaud once. Oh, boy! thou art now about to be plunged into a strange and wonderful vortex, the sight of which, for a time, will dazzle and overwhelm thy senses; thy prospect of life will seem a smooth and level surface, for thy giddy mind to sport and dance upon—men for a time will appear as angels to thee, and every being thou

wilt suppose thy friend; thou wilt believe the world moves but for thy enjoyment, and all creatures combined for thy felicity: but ere thou hast well tasted the sweets of thy youth, thorns will spring up in thy path, and choke the perfection of thy delights; and the smooth, level surface that promised thee so fair, thou wilt prove to be a rough and turbulent ocean, teeming with deceitful and devouring quicksands to engulf thy inexperience, and without thy utmost care swallow thee in perdition; and when thou lookest on man, admire him as the image of thy Creator, but distrust him as a fiend, for he will smile upon thee, and smiling damn thy peace; he will promise thee fair, and give thee honeyed words, but he will rob thee, and embitter thy joys. Trust none, hate none, love none—it is dangerous alike to do so: bear towards all a common and charitable feeling, and even then thou wilt not escape snares and villainy. The world, my poor boy, is an indescribable compound—man made up of such inde-

finite materials as have outdone anthroposophy, and ever will remain a problem undefined."

At this part the poor old man became faint with his emotions, and rested on the shoulder of his pupil. Selinus advanced to him with much respect, returned his thanks for the care and trouble he had bestowed upon his son, that thus far he had snatched him from ignorance and superstition; at the same time expressing a wish that Oscar could still enjoy the benefit of so wise and able an instructor; adding also, that he felt himself incompetent to take so precious a charge upon himself.

Ishmaud replied—"Thou hast nought to fear, merchant; I hope thy boy has a good disposition, and will only want the common care of a parent like thee at the first onset. Thy early life, Christian was no doubt good—thy manhood hath been such as all just men must approve."

Silenus was struck with surprise to hear this from one whom he supposed an entire

stranger, and one that he had no recollection of ever seeing before : he fixed his eyes with a gaze of wonder and inquiry on the countenance of the hermit, but spoke not.

Ishmaud read his meaning, and said—  
“ I have known thee, Selinus, many, many years ago—I knew thee also for a good man, as the world passes—let that suffice thy curiosity ; and proud am I indeed that the prophet hath thrown thy son in my way ; but had I known him as the heir to Selinus, the rich merchant, I could not have done more than I have for Bradine the gipsy boy ; I am sure he will profit by my instruction, and I am fully repaid. I would to Heaven, Selinus, I could cancel my debt to thee as easily as thou canst thine to me ! ”

The merchant knew not how to reply, but looked by turns on each around him ; for it now struck him the recluse was some poor maniac, that after the late lucid interval, where reason seemed to hold so proud an ascendancy, had again relapsed,

and his disordered senses wandered back to years long past, and his imagination pictured him as a former friend.

Ishmaud seemed perfectly to understand what was passing in the mind of the Christian, and with a sort of smile beaming on his wrinkled countenance, continued speaking—"Christian, because I am old, and talk thus, thou thinkest my mind is not sound. Alas! alas! too perfect and acute are my reasoning faculties, else perhaps I should be more happy—more miserable I cannot be—no, no, my troubles and misfortunes should have driven me mad; still so stubborn is my reason, that all my accumulated horrors live too fresh and fertile on my brain. Oh, Christian, thou art now blessed with a son to be thy leaning-staff to the grave! I was once blessed with sons—handsome, fine, vigorous, and proud young men—yet in less than an hour was I cruelly robbed of them all—saw them fall before mine eyes by the powerful swords of mine enemy, as they were defending my life against a host of barbarous

foes—yes, Christian, hacked like branches from the parent tree, and strewed before my face by their murderers.”

At this part of the recital old Selinus was so affected that the colour fled his cheek, and he shuddered ; which Ishmaud perceiving, continued with increased energy—“ What dost thou shudder at, Christian—at the bare naming of one horrid deed ? I have seen and felt a world of such woes, and yet I have my reason left ; whereas thou turnest pale at the recital. Oh ! I could fill thy ears with such a tale of misery which I have been forced to endure would make thee mad to hear ; but I have borne them all, and have my reason still. No, no, merchant, think me not out of my wits, but pity me, that my senses are left, or that I am alive.” Here he paused a few moments, but soon recommenced smartly—“ But let it pass—I will not distress thee with my sorrows ; they are my own, and my wrongs must die with me, unrevenged—that thought is hard.”

Felix answered—"Good father, wrongs like thine cry aloud for retribution, and justice demands it—why dost thou not appeal to the law?"

Ishmaud looked on the late prince in a strange manner for a space ere he spoke, but at length broke silence thus—"Honest simpleton, thou knowest not what thou wouldst urge; shall I appeal to the thief that robbed me? bid the murderer execute justice on his own head, to appease the spirits of my children? Why dost thou not sue to thy father for thy wrongs, and demand he take vengeance on his own head? thou wouldst succeed as favourably as I."

Felix was silenced, and his distress was visible.

Ishmaud continued—"Thy father, unhappy youth—though with thee that endearing appellation is for ever cancelled—the caliph Elmuton is my bitterest enemy and rankest foe; he is moreover a villain, and a cold-blooded murderer! a wretch, unfit alike to govern or to live! but a favourite

child of Fortune's, chance gave him his elevation in life, and power sustains him in his seat. He was jealous of me, and drove me from my home—nay, proscribed me; but not content with all this, must hunt me like a venemous pest from place to place, destroyed my tenderest ties, and persecuted me—nought but my blood would satisfy his insatiate appetite. Surrounded by sycophants and creatures whose fortunes made them desperate, he pursued me and mine, until he cut every remaining thread of hope. At last, made furious by my wrongs, I fought like the enraged tigress, surrounded by my darling boys: I saw them fall for me, Christian—their dead bodies made a barrier between me and my oppressors. At last, and with only one faithful follower, I unfortunately, alas! made my escape in the confusion of the carnage—yes, escaped death only, unprotected, shelterless, penniless, and almost naked, for the fiends surprised us in the dead hour of night; with my wretched



companion 'I wandered, living on the scanty produce of wild fruit trees, supporting nature in a way thou canst not conceive, Christian—shunning the haunts of men, and forced to shelter where the wild animal lurked: and what were all these troubles and privations endured for? why the hope of revenge supported the spirit. Alas! that hope has now vanished—ay, Christian, for years it has passed away, and yet am I forced to exist and have my being, with all my accumulated sorrows fresh upon my mind; even sometimes have we had to thank a man like Kilrest for the poor support of nature. Oh, merchant! man knows not what he can endure until the trial is past. Who would have thought, when this long and now-grizzly beard first sprouted upon these proud lips, that it should ever have grown to witness such degradation? yet perhaps it may be just; and how valuable an example, if man would but profit by it!"

He paused for time, then turning to Selinus, and taking his hand, resumed—

“Come, old man, thou and I have buffetted the storms of life: these poor boys have yet their share to bear. Let all pass: it has passed. Would to Heaven I could forget my share!”

The poor old recluse saw he had distressed his auditors, and turning to Selinus, said—“Thou dost intend to visit Thebes—I will give thee a sealed scroll to deliver there to a friend of mine, who occasionally relieves my necessities, and I believe is the only one, save my companion here, that knows my true story, and who is intrusted with my every secret; but that crowded city is too conspicuous a place for one like me to reside in, else on the bosom of a sincere friend might I find a partial resting-place, and my natural wants, at least, be better supplied. In him thou shalt also find a friend, Christian.”

Selinus thanked the aged stranger, and again acknowledged the many obligations he felt under to him already; and then proposed to his two sons to take their departure back to the cavern, as the day was

fast closing, and the path they had to pursue dark and rough.

Ishmaud however, would not hear of their taking leave until they had entered his abode, and refreshed themselves with some fruit and milk.

The Christians at last were persuaded to comply with the request : they entered a low cave, for it was nothing more, about eight feet wide, and twelve long, and had no doubt been some time or other not only the work, but the retreat and den of beasts of prey : the entrance was low, and secured by a wicket, thickly woven with the branches of a hard prickly tree, whose texture was so stubborn when dried as to resist the attack of any four-footed enemy : the whole furniture consisted of two wretched mats, composed of withered moss and leaves, two common wooden bowls, and one coarse earthen pitcher, containing milk, which they occasionally procured, as well as a scanty supply of water, from the caravansary, and in return for which were forced to

put up with the gibes and insults of the ignorant. On one of the pallets lay stretched the form of a man, about the middle stature, and seemingly in age to correspond with his companion: it seemed he was sleeping. An old cimeter lay on the head of each mat. Ishmaud approached, and thus accosted his friend — “What ho! Kesto! here is Bradine come to see us, and brought visitors. Arouse thee, man, and bid the stranger welcome!”

The companion-hermit muttered something as he arose from his bed, and when his sight met the Christians he took no further notice of them than by a forbidding and distrustful glance; but addressing himself to Oscar, said—“Boy, you are wrong—Bradine, you are very wrong to bring the idle and curious at this time! or did they think we should appear the more wonderful when sleeping?”

Ishmaud answered they were not the idle and foolish visitors, such as were too often brought to the dell for their annoyance: he expressed himself glad that he

had met them, and derived a sort of pleasure from the interview.

As Ishmaud delivered this he gave fire to his lamp, and shewed the countenance of Kesto, as it bent full in the face of his brother in solitude : his features were dark, and by the side of his companion he looked forbidding : with a morose and heavy tone and manner he replied—" What sounds were those I heard? Did the tongue of Ishmaud say that he felt *pleasure*, and was *glad*? Indeed then you are visited by strangers. I thought you had long since forgotten even these names."

Ishmaud replied—" Kesto, thy rebuke in some measure may be just, for never more ought such phrases to have passed my lips."

" Oh yes they should," was the reply ; " but to be used in one sense only—that you should be *glad* to revenge your injuries, and feel *pleasure* in the execution."

" Ay, fellow-sufferer," said Ishmaud, " my wrongs must die with me, and revenge sleep in the same grave, to the dis-

quiet of my spirit. But let us now have no more of this theme. We are going to lose Bradine."

"Well, what is that to us?" was the reply. "His wits are sharp, and was old enough long since to be sent out, and add another plunderer to the calendar, and to swell the catalogue of sin and deceit."

Ishmaud answered—"Thou dost not mean thus of our pupil, brother; thou art soured in thy mind by this intrusion, and balked in thy sleep."

"I have been balked of sleep so long," said Kesto, "that I have forgot the real enjoyment; and what I mean of the boy, appertaineth alike to all men—they are all plunderers, but some more fortunate than others: our chance is gone by."

Ishmaud here took his companion apart, and for some time remained in earnest conversation, in one passage of which Kesto fixed an ardent gaze on Selinus, and at the same time uttered loud enough for the merchant to catch—"By the prophet he is the same man! and well can I

trace his features through his wrinkles. But you are acting wrong, very wrong, Ishmaud; I would not trust any man, much more a Christian merchant."

Several other unconnected sentences were picked up as the father and sons were partaking of the refreshment; and with much earnestness and gesture of manner was the discourse carried on between the two recluses, and which also gave much uneasiness to Selinus and Felix. Oscar was used to their habits in a certain degree, therefore their particularities disturbed him not so much.

## CHAPTER IX.

But this, and one small promise more—  
Never with curious thought explore  
The secrets that he buried here :  
The day will come when to thine ear  
A tedious tale I shall relate,  
Which tenfold wonder must create.

CHARLOTTE C. RICHARDSON.

WHEN Ishmaud and Kesto had ended the conversation, the former turned to the upper extremity of the cave, and removing a piece of rock, took from the cavity a small roll of parchment and writing apparatus; and taking the lamp from before the Christians, began inditing on one of the folds of the skin. Kesto added to the lamp, and caused light sufficient to illumine the space.

This was evidently done that he might investigate the features of the strangers; and so it proved; for he fixed his back



against the opposite side, in front of Selinus and Felix, and with sullen taciturnity kept his eyes first set on one, and then on the countenance of the other. Silence reigned throughout the miserable residence.

Selinus was astonished at the rapidity with which Ishmaud traced his characters on the surface of the parchment, and by the glances he could now and then catch, the precision and regularity of the lines confirmed the mind of the merchant that the recluse was a well-educated man, and who once in life must have filled some conspicuous and important station; but who or what he had been was beyond the comprehension of Selinus; nor could he trace in his features the slightest recollection of a prior knowledge.

Kesto narrowly watched the curious eye of the merchant, as it stole toward Ishmaud, and took every opportunity in his power to intercept his view, and embarrass his vision.

In the midst of this the group were in-

interrupted and surprised by the blast of a small horn, that seemed at some distance, yet so near, that innumerable echoes responded among the rocks adjoining the dell, and awakened silence all around.

Oscar started on his feet, and exclaimed —“ That horn is an alarm from the heights above the ruins, and never but on cases of great emergency is it sounded. Some harm must be on foot ; let us away, and give our aid to my companions.”

He flew to the entrance, and was making his way out of the cave, when Kesto impeded his progress, and advised him to be cautious in venture, and wait for a time where he was : if his presence was necessary, his companions knew where to seek him.

Oscar answered the recluse his absence might be almost unknown at the ruins ; and where to seek him must be surmise only, as no one of the gipsy tribe was aware of this visit to the dell ; nor did they themselves intend or thought of

doing so when they departed from the cavern.

Ishmaud by this time had joined them, and perceiving the anxiety of the Christians, bade them calm their fears—the true cause would soon be ascertained.

The whole party then sought the open space in front of the retreat, each ear eagerly swallowing the passing breeze, forming a thousand different conjectures from the many sounds created by the fleeting air.

At length Oscar, taking his whistle from his band, and without giving any previous notice, blew so shrill a blast, that Selinus and Felix started amain, being unaccustomed to the practice.

Ishmaud in haste, and rather smartly, inquired what the incautious youth gave that signal for, when he heard none previously to demand the correspondence?

Oscar exclaimed in a transport—"Oh yes, good father, I answered to a call, but at so great a distance, my fresh organs could scarce discern it. Listen! listen,

Felix! if it is us they are searching, we shall soon be satisfied."

Felix laid his ear upon the breeze, in the direction of the rock, and the whole party the same; when presently Oscar and Felix both uttered at a time—"Another sound!"

Thus were they convinced; and in a very short space the aged part of the congregated few joined in the belief, as the sounds now became distinctly to be heard by all.

Ishmaud requested they would retire within the cave, and make the barrier secure, save Oscar, who would be in no danger from the trained wolves and wolf dogs that at all times, as we have before stated, travelled with the gipsies in their nightly excursions. Ishmaud had once nearly fallen a sacrifice to his hardihood, by standing unprotected at the entrance of his abode in the night, when a party of the ravine gipsies were returning this private way from a marauding adventure near the caravansary, at the time a rich

caravan of merchants were halting there, on their way to Thebes.

Lights were now perceivable at different points; and the bark of dogs, as being put on a scent, could plainly be heard.

Oscar gave another loud and long call; it was quickly answered, when Ishmaud hurried all but Oscar to disappear, and prevent any unpleasantness or accident arising from the trained beasts and strangers.

Felix expressed a wish to remain with Oscar, but was overruled by the others, who now with him entered the abode, and closed the thorny wicket. They however had made themselves thus secure but a few minutes ere their ears were astounded by heart-rending and loud-piercing cries from Oscar in distress, which seemed to issue some few yards distant from the entrance. It appears the youth had strayed thus far to have a better view of the approach of the gipsy gang.

Each inmate of the recluses' abode flew

to the doorway, when the horrible growling of some savage beast gave confirmation it had seized upon its prey.

Ishmaud and Kesto snatching their cimeters, and one the lamp, sought the spot where the groans sprang from. At this moment a most distressing shriek from Oscar chilled their blood, as their eyes met the appalling and overwhelming sight of the poor devoted and beloved youth, fast held beneath the pounce of a large and fierce hyena. As the distracted father rushed to his aid, the savage animal endeavoured to drag its victim to the brink of a steep declivity. Selinus and Felix were unarmed.

The gipsies' torches now flashed full in view; but ere they could arrive on the fatal spot their succour would be unavailing, and Oscar lost. Ishmaud and Kesto made repeated blows at the infuriated beast; but the active and cunning creature seemed to tighten his hold, and leap from side to side to avoid his antagonists' weapons, at each spring tearing afresh the

flesh of the tortured youth, and gaining the frightful precipice now at so short a distance. Ishmaud gave the beast a tremendous wound across the flank, which covered him and his prey alike with gore, while the pain it caused gave a stimulus to his rage, and his growling was now become terrific in the extreme.

The Christians almost rent the air with their cries for aid. The gipsies heard them, and urged onward with incredible speed. The hyena had got within a very few paces of the descent. Selinus and Felix placed themselves between the gulf and the enraged animal. The recluses were afraid to strike, lest at one random blow they might shut out every hope, and kill the hapless object of their regard.

Oscar gave a faint shriek: the frightful eyes of the half-mad brute emitted fire, and he plunged with redoubled fury. The dogs and tamed wolves were heard scampering over the ground toward the ghastly and blood-besmeared place, as the gip-

sies backed their speed and 'courage with oaths and execrations.

The frantic father was now seen holding by the legs of his son, to tear him from destruction so horrible, and prevent his falling down the death-yawning steep. Oh. Heavens, the awful crisis is at hand ! one plunge more, and the darling boy is for ever lost !

At this critical moment two large wolf dogs leaped on the savage beast, and seizing it by the thick part of the inner thigh behind, the assailed hyena violently shook his prey, to disengage his fangs, and made the dell reecho with his roaring.

Gipsies now arrived with lights, that dazzled his sight, and he stood at fearful bay. Two dauntless young men led fresh dogs to the attack, and returned dragging the bleeding Osear. Kesto, by a well-directed blow from the rear of the beset animal, nearly cleaved his head in twain ; and other dogs joining in the onset, soon stretched him dead, and banqueted on his carcase.



The mangied youth was stripped in an instant, when it was discovered his right breast was shockingly lacerated; the full and fleshy part was literally torn from the bone, and various imprintments of the large fangs of the animal were visible. The poor youth spoke not, and his appearance, except a slight and convulsive breathing, was as one dead.

The agonized parent hung over the body of his new-found son in all the excess of despair. Ishmaud procured salt and water, and the wound was cleansed from the foam of the beast and particles of Oscar's garments.

We have already said how great was the knowledge of the gipsies in qualities and properties of herbs and roots; and in no part of Egypt grew what was useful or baneful more than on the base of the rocks hereabouts; and the dell was sought by those curious in art far and near to procure ingredients for their many purposes. Ishmaud performed the surgical operations, by adjusting the

mangled parts, &c. ; while Kesto brought from the cave a phial, out of which he poured a few drops into water, and gave to the injured to swallow, the which soon revived his spirit, and he again shewed favourable symptoms of restoration to life. Ishmaud desired he would not speak, nor those about to interrupt him in any way, if they wished for his safety.

Several gipsies now returned with herbs and such like, which being placed over the wound, and with bandages kept close, soon the hemorrhage was stopped. The unfortunate young man was then carefully removed to the interior of the solitary abode, and laid on a mat.

The greater part of the gipsy gang returned to the ruins, to convey the fatal intelligence, while some remained the night through to watch with the distressed Christians the fate of their beloved.

The hours passed in silent anxiety, except when it was broken by the heavy and deep-fetched sigh, or the escaping prayer

bursting from the confines of a troubled bosom in short ejaculations.

Long ere the sun was visible several gipsies had arrived in the dell with styp-tics, and such things as were proper for the invalid, and which could not be procured at the first moment of the mishap, and must now be applied, when his strength would allow him to be thoroughly examined and dressed. Nourishment was given him for the undertaking; and Ishmaud expressed his determination to examine the wound, and if possible discover the extent of danger that might be apprehended.

Oscar was again removed, and brought to the open front of the cave, purposely for the benefit of light and air, when Ishmaud displayed much skill by his proceeding on his patient, and declared it his opinion that no material bad consequences would follow, provided the youth was kept quiet for a short time, as the relentless beast had not seriously injured the vital parts.

This was a pleasing intelligence to all parties; and to Mahomet and Heaven were sincere thanksgivings returned, the Musselman and Christian in one small space seen in earnest devotion, endeavouring to penetrate the throne of mercy through different mediums. Neither the merchant nor Felix removed from the cave, but with anxious solicitude guarded the bed of their unfortunate relative.

Things passed thus for two days, Ishmaud at every opportunity holding a reserved and mysterious kind of conversation with the merchant relative to the late state affairs of Elmuton, and endeavouring by all means that in him lay to sift his opinion of the future.

Selinus became satisfied he was not the man he would fain pass for; but so cautious was the hermit, the merchant could not in the slightest degree discover aught of his former life, more than he had developed in the first interview; and since the accident of Oscar, he had only resumed his pen and ink in the absence of Kesto,

of whom he seemed in a certain degree to be afraid, or under a particular sort of restraint; or whether that fear arose in Kesto from the open and candid disposition natural, although restrained, in Ishmaud, and that he might in an unguarded moment disclose aught detrimental to their safety, or what else, it was impossible for the Christian to ascertain. Albeit, he was certainly more reserved and circumspect, even in commonplace chat with the stranger, in the presence of his brother recluse, than in his absence; and whenever Selinus gave his opinion of the public affairs at Cairo, each delivered thought was eagerly caught at, and with avidity swallowed by the hungry ear of Ishmaud; and when the account of the last defeat and cruel butchery of the Mamelukes by Sebastian, at the time our narrative of events commences, the poor old recluse could scarcely retain his emotions, and in an ecstasy of woe exclaimed—"Oh, holy prophet! when shall the persecution of thy devoted sons find an end! Above

twenty years have they travailed thus in grief and misery. Spare them; oh Mahomet! yet in the event bless them!"

Selinus expected by the present mood of the speaker to lead him further on in the subject that so affected him; but Ishmaud as cautiously relapsed into his wonted track, or wholly changed the topic.

On the evening of the second day of their sojourn in the dell, Kesto being gone to the caravansary for something needful, or to learn if he could gain any information how the busy world of man passed, which both the recluses seemed at all times anxious to obtain, Ishmaud desired Felix to attend Oscar, and requested Selinus to accompany him, that they might enjoy the refreshing air of evening.

This was instantly complied with: they however had not proceeded far ere the Musselman thus accosted the Christian—  
“Christian, I have so long borne the hard and distressing fate of fortune, and suffered so much formerly by the wiles of man, my heart is almost callous to the race, and

it is become nearly my nature to abhor the very name of friend, and to distrust each mortal being alike. Yet, Christian, I have two friends left in this unkind world—one is Kesto, the brother in adversity you see here with me : several years ago he more than once saved my life at the hazard of his own ; he has been the solitary companion and sharer of my sad fortunes above half the common age of man ; or perhaps I ought to say we have grown together from our youth, and have ever been as a part of each other ; yet of a strange contrariety is our dispositions in most particulars. Kesto was ever close and reserved, extremely cautious ; I was once open, generous, and prone to believe all men as just. That failing is a curse to man. Oh, Christian, it has been my ruin ! But of this enough.”

Here the solitary man clasped his hands upon his forehead, and stood a few moments as to recover himself. That done, he thus recommenced—“ I have another friend—I told thee so, Selinus. He it is

I would recommend thee to apply to on thy arrival at Thebes—he it is has served my necessities since I have been forced to reside where cruel mortals but little resort. For fifteen years Kesto and myself, dragged out our miserable life in a forest not far distant from Thebes: then my friend and I could often steal an interview, and then his charity—yes, Christian, I must call it charity—assisted in some degree to chase the sad miseries of our time away. Even that lonely and deserted place was too comfortable an asylum for the wretched exile Ishmaud and his faithful friend; our retreat was surprised by chance; our bitter foes while hunting by accident discovered our hiding, and we were now in danger of our lives. To be brief, we fled, and crossed the desert, and have since combated in this drear and uncouth abode, with a life of misery, want, and want. My friend I have not heard of but in the common worldly course of men and things; for he is of consequence in that great city, merchant, as thou wert



at Cairo, though not in the same way. The stock he supplied us with at parting has for some length of time been exhausted, and now we exist on alms, given with insult and received with impunity."

At this part of his narration he fixed a look on Selinus, as he would read his very inmost thoughts, and taking a fold from his bosom, said—"Christian, dare I trust thee? Thou art going to Thebes: thou couldst see my friend: tell him too that thou hast seen me. Oh what a balm would that be to his tender and loving heart! Yet, merchant, I dare not tell thee who I am; nor doth it matter. Swear to me that thou wilt deliver this pack<sup>e</sup> as it is directed: that doing will suffice<sup>e</sup> for all. But if thou breakest the seal, and so betray my confidence, if thou doest<sup>t</sup> me this wrong, Christian, perdition seiz<sup>e</sup> thee, and all earthly tortures for ever maunt those belonging to thee! I have been deceived, merchant, wofully deceived, by men too that seemed fairer than thou dost, calling themselves my sworn

and sacred friends, but proving themselves my most accursed enemies.”

Selinus fixed a look on the hermit full of expression, and thus in speech delivered it—“ Ishmaud, thou hast repeatedly said thou knowest me, and knew me long since; thou hast also passed some encomiums on my character; yet, Turk, how dare I believe what thou hast said to be truth, when now thou wouldst distrust me so, that even in the custody of a sealed scroll thou art afraid to trust mine honesty? I must say, Ishmaud, I think thou doest me an injustice; nor in my most remote recollection can I draw of feature or manner any knowledge of thee.”

The recluse was evidently much abashed, and embracing the Christian after the oriental custom, replied—“ Good Christian, I confess I wrong thee—I have heretofore wronged thee in certain points which it is not in my power to make thee reparation for. But in this particular I do confess and believe I have wronged

thee, and can but ask thy forgiveness, and intrust thee with the packet."

He then thrust the scroll into the hand of the merchant, and sealed the delivery with several falling tears.

This was too much for the open-hearted and honest trader; a sympathetic flow glistened in his lashes. They exchanged the mutual embrace; and Selinus promised by all his future hopes that on reaching Thebes his first care should be to seek him it was directed for, and deliver the scroll safely to its owner.

This matter being brought to a conclusion, the Christian turned to the Musselman, saying—"Ishmaud, if thou art under any former obligation to me, I say again it is unknown to me, and do thou for ever cancel it from thy mind; for I am deeply indebted to thee for the care thou hast so lately bestowed on my poor boy; and, as a small recompence, I crave most earnestly that thou wilt accept some part of the treasure I have about me to serve thy present emergencies."

Here he exhibited to the recluse the jewels and coin left by Kilrest, and which was recovered from the pads of the mules.

Ishmaud started at the sight, as a man would who was suddenly restored to his blessed vision after years of darkness, and beholding the glorious sun in his proudest splendour for his first object, and exclaimed—"For the love of the prophet's shade, by the holy reverence of his tomb, merchant, hide that treasure from my view! hide it from the sight of mankind; for it is the curse and the bane of men, and the destruction of their souls! and rather would I than take one moiety from thy store, perish in the most gradual lingering for want. No, Selinus, if the least particle of worth thou hast would purchase me a splendid existence for a thousand years, I would not touch it.—Nay, nay, urge it not, or we part for ever!"

Selinus again importuned him to take a part as a loan, saying, when his daughter returned from Cairo with the gipsy chief, she would bring such an abundance

for supply, that hereafter he and his might set the world's necessities at defiance.

The recluse sighed most affectingly, and answered—"Ay, merchant, so once thought I, when the fairest treasures of Egypt were within my gripe; but I lost them all, and in so short a space were they wrested from me, that when all was gone, and distress came upon me, at first it appeared but as a frightful dream: but soon, alas! I awoke too sensible to my horrors and the fatal reality." Ishmaud at this part was so overcome with his feelings that articulation for a time was suspended; and when he could answer, said in continuance—"But why need I tell it to thee, Selinus—thou knowest it all. Pray put up thy wealth, it is thine own, nor speak of it to me more, nor torture my feelings with thy kindnesses."

At this moment Kesto was seen entering the extremity of the dell with rather a hurried step. Selinus observed a kind of embarrassing uneasiness come over Ishmaud, and offered to retire ere the com-

panion recluse should approach ; when the other, as if ashamed of what he had betrayed, bade him remain, continuing at the same time—"My friend Kesto, you must know, merchant, is a good man, though distrustful of the world even to a fault ; and he is a brave man even to hardihood ; but so much of the rough humour of Fortune hath visited him and me, that he would rather linger in misery than trust any human being with the chance of being made great or happy. He is no doubt right ; but hush ! he is here, nor speak thou further of the scroll thou hast in charge."

Kesto now approached them. Ishmaud saw he had something he wished to communicate, yet knew not how to ask the contents of his bosom in the presence of Selinus. The merchant saw this, and after giving the usual salutation, hurried toward the cave, leaving the brethren in adversity together.

Being alone, Kesto thus began—"There

is a small caravan arrived on this side the desert—I cannot learn its purpose—there is something more than trade, I can discover that; and I have learned Cairo is in much cabal; the Mamelukes are for the moment subdued, but not conquered. This news arrived at Thebes but a few hours previous to the departure of the caravan, when on the instant many wealthy Mamelukes and a host of followers took their departure to Cairo by the passage of the Nile: what is the purport of their visit I could not learn, nor could I learn whether or not our good friend Arruck was in the number departed. Some important matter is on foot no doubt, and we must wait the event.”

“Alas!” cried Ishmaud, “the ill-fated Mamelukes are but rushing to their death! this Christian here, Selinus, has informed me of their late overthrow and cruel butchery by that hated fiend Sebastian. Oh, Kesto! let us at once dispatch a gipsy to the banks of the river, meet them in their passage, and thus prevent their being en-

tangled in the snare of that savage beast."

Kesto, as was usual on occasions like the present, objected to all interference, particularly where these cunning gipsies were to be employed, but advised to remain as they were until the return of Kilrest at least from the city of Cairo, when no doubt every public or private transaction of note would be fully entered into and explained, by dint of that gipsy's craft. This conversation brought them to the entrance of their abode, where they found several gipsies assembled, and impatiently waiting the arrival of the recluses

The news of the halt of the caravan had of course reached them on the first moment of its appearance, and caused much commotion and bustle among them; yet could they not determine what course to pursue, having lost their chief and ruler: neither had pigeon or any kind of intelligence whatever been received from him. Thus had two days and nights passed; the anxiety of Selinus and Felix was becoming distressing in the extreme. Oscar still



was weak, but in a favourable way toward convalescence. .

The gipsies expressed their apprehension lest the recluses' abode might now be visited by curious strangers belonging to the passing caravan, therefore they expressed their wish at once to remove the wounded Oscar to the cavern in the ruins. Ishmaud and Kesto also, upon deliberation, saw the necessity for so doing; for if the circumstance of a young wounded stranger being the inmate of these mysterious solitaires' abode should become known to passengers, and those passengers bound for Cairo, they knew not what conjectures might be formed; for ere this no doubt the silent fate of the late prince Felix and his guards had created a thousand different ideas in the reckless mind of Sebastian, and would no doubt cause a most diligent search to be made by that very vigilant officer: therefore it was agreed on the instant to remove Oscar to the ruins. A litter was quickly formed of the pliant branches of the palm tree; four gipsies

bore the suffering and faint youth upon their shoulders, while Selinus and Felix steadied the carriage, one on each side, forming a cavalcade not much unlike a funeral, and the hearts of the Christians were as sorrowful as mourners passing to the grave of a beloved relative.

The sorrowful party moved slow and carefully with their precious burthen over the rugged way, and gained the cavern in safety. The wretched females, inmates of this polluted den of cheat and infamy, shewed a solicitude and anxiety for the unfortunate and mangled youth, that fully developed that the heart of women, in whatever situation, when tender and soft claims demand their aid, will still be the soother and care-chaser of the lord of creation, *man*. The poor creatures vied with each other in attentions for his comfort and ease, shewing, however rude and uninviting Nature may have hewn the casket, still the breast of woman contains an inestimable jewel, if the imperious and op-

posite sex knew how to value and appreciate its worth.

The act of removal was attended with less consequences and inconvenience from fatigue than could have been expected from the weak state of the invalid. The young man spoke cheerfully to those around him; and the home he had been so long used to, wretched and forbidding as it appeared to a stranger, raised a smile of satisfaction on his countenance, and on the whole he was better, (as the bulletin royal at St. James's sometimes says.) He cast a look on Selinus and Felix full of meaning; yet for a time he durst not ask the question that so agitated his bosom. His parent anticipated it, and dreaded the utterance.

At length Oscar calmly said—"Selinus, father, has aught been heard of Orinda and Kilrest?"

This question almost annihilated the merchant, and for a time articulation was suspended in him.

Oscar perceived the question was em-

barrasing, and gently squeezed the hand of his sire, as he would ask pardon for it.

This language was too much, and in too tender a manner demanded the answer : the overwhelmed father was now dumb.

Felix with much difficulty answered—“ Nothing,” for nothing further could he add—his emotions tied his tongue.

Oscar sighed, and faintly said—“ Fear nought—all will be well with my poor sister.” He then sunk into a gentle dose, caused by the exertion in removal.

Felix and Selinus remained by his mattress; and for the remainder of the night the cavern was as silent as the sepulchre.

According to the eastern custom, but without religious observances, the motley inhabitants of the ruins were stirring with the first dawn of morn : the suspense of night seemed to confirm their determination how to spend the forthcoming day. A hasty repast was partaken, and a scene entirely new, as to the extent, presented itself to the Christians. It had now been some time since a caravan had passed, and

consequently those artisans in trickery had led rather a slothful life of late. Suspension from business begat energy to recommence in the many pursuits concomitant on their avocations and professions. The aged gipsy whom we have had occasion to speak of before in the course of narrative, approached Selinus, and shewing every mark of respect, said—"In the absence of our chief, as is our custom, I have commanded our tribe to set out in different adventures, now an opportunity offers. It is so long since, seignior Selinus, that a caravan or any thing in particular has demanded our exertions, that our necessities now demand our vigilance. This being the case, seignior, most of our party will hence to-day on business: but withal a sufficient number of men shall be left to protect and attend on you. Our perambulations will not extend far distant; nor shall we now, for certain reasons, venture beyond the precincts of the caravansary. May the blessings of the prophet be on

you, and thus I take my leave until night."

The Christians thanked him for his courtesy, and begged that they might not be considered any restriction on their usual practices.

With much reverence the man in "brief authority" took his leave; when soon was the hall in one confused bustle: the centre of the floor was spread with all sorts of garments, some of which were of the complete nondescript order, and paraphernalia to correspond. Each gipsy attired himself according to the part he was to perform. Necromancers, jugglers, conjurors, fire-eaters, serpent-eaters, tumblers, and fools out of number, presently formed a queer masquerade. Nor was the animal creation in much less requisition; trained dogs of all sizes were now accoutred for dancing and pantomime; tame monkees for mimicry shewed their pleasure and eagerness to defraud by their wanton gambols the pockets of the foolish bipeds; while in a more distant part of the ruins

camels were whimsically attired to display their wonderful art on the light fantastic hoof. The tamed serpents were carefully examined, and every pernicious member extracted from them. To complete the wonderful deception, a rude and discordant species of music was provided, and put into ready requisition, to complete the general take-in ; while puffers innumerable graced the entire throng. To be sure, nothing is done without *puffing*, even in enlightened England, down from the peer poet, to the licensed lottery puffer on Cornhill, and the twopenny pamphleteer puffer.

Thus endeth the second volume.—And now, my darling Pegasus, shake thy silvery mane, and set off full speed—for Cairo, ho !

END OF VOL. II.







